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# The Nation.

October 19, 1985 $1.25; U.K. 65p


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ORIAL

## TAILS AT 11 O'CLOCK

It all began with *Roots*. Television's massive investment in social significance yielded a new genre of video drama, based on topical issues and historical events. There was *Holocaust*, based on the Holocaust, and *The Winds of War*, based on the war. There were miniseries set in imperial Japan and colonial Australia, and TV movies examining (some might say exploiting) incest, alcoholism, wife abuse and diseases from Alzheimer's to Hodgkin's. A high point of hype was reached two years ago, when ABC finally got around to the terminal social issue of our time, nuclear annihilation. *The Day After* had absolutely nothing good to say about global extinction. It was a hard act to follow.

But not impossible. The same ABC is now shooting a kind of antidote to its own doomsday scenario. *AMERIKA*, a $40 million, sixteen-hour miniseries, is supposed to stick it to the nuclear crybabies who think it's better to be Red than dead. It will docudramatize a bombless, bloodless Soviet takeover of America, by unspecified means, and show Americans what it is like to live under a totalitarian regime.

*AMERIKA* (with a funny-looking "R" that makes you think of Russia) seems to have been scheduled in response to criticism of *The Day After* by the rabid right wing's watchdog, Accuracy in Media, which claimed the film's message was cryptically pro-Soviet. No doubt AIM will be emboldened by its success to promote revisionist programs on other issues. How about *Final Solution*, a sympathetic treatment of Aryan superiority? Or *Legree!*—slavery from the master's point of view? *In Their Place* will present the arguments for wife beating, and *Happy Hour* will celebrate public drunkenness. And for anyone worried about fairness in media, representatives of each side will talk those issues to death after the show, on the news and *Nightline*.


WHY BOMB TUNIS?
Milton Viorst

SPREADING EGOMANIA
Calvin Trillin

GERMANY'S SPY FLAP
Norman Birnbaum

SALVADORAN MAFIA
Kenneth E. Sharpe

ERASING PALESTINIANS FROM HISTORY
Edward W. Said

MARSHALL/ 'NATION' POETRY PRIZE


THE INTERNMENT CASES

## RETURN OF THE 'YELLOW RIL'

3

PETER IRONS

Gordon Hirabayashi is probably unique among Americans for having endured two trials in the same case, and in the same courthouse, more than forty years apart. The first time he entered the Federal courthouse in Seattle was in 1942. He was a 24-year-old senior at the University of Washington, charged with violating the military curfew and evacuation orders that preceded the wartime internment of 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry. Prompted by his Quaker beliefs and revulsion at the removal of his family and friends to camps encircled by barbed wire, Hirabayashi turned himself in to the Federal Bureau of Investigation to force a constitutional test of the military edicts.

The trial took less than a day. Judge Lloyd Black denied Hirabayashi's constitutional challenge that the orders presented a case of unlawful racial discrimination. In his fevered opinion, Black trotted out all the "Yellow Peril" stereotypes, labeling the Japanese as "unbelievably treacherous" and "shrewd masters of tricky concealment among any who resemble them," and asserting that Caucasians cannot distinguish one Oriental from another. If Japanese saboteurs were to parachute into the Puget Sound area, Black predicted, they would seek "human camouflage" for their undercover work and "take advantage of any disloyalty among their kind."

Black's ruling on the legal issues made the outcome of the trial a foregone conclusion. Hirabayashi did not dispute the government's evidence that he had refused to obey the curfew and evacuation orders. With that admission on

(*Continued on Page 376*)

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# LETTERS.

## COCKBURN VS. ISRAEL, ROUND 999

*New York City*

I am at a loss to understand why Alexander Cockburn persists in beating up on Israel. In his August 17/24 column, Cockburn estimates that Israel exported $419 million in goods to South Africa in 1983 and cites old reports, which he fails to date, to bolster his claim that much of this was in armaments.

The current yearbook of the International Institute for Strategic Studies lists the South African arsenal as made in France, Italy or Britain. Israel has scrupulously observed the 1977 U.N. embargo against South Africa, a point confirmed by former U.S. ambassador Andrew Young as far back as 1979. Nor does Cockburn bother to add that compared even with his pumped-up $419 million, the United States exported $2.2 billion to South Africa in 1983; Japan, $1.76 billion; West Germany, $2 billion; and Britain, $1.69 billion. Nor that the International Monetary Fund reports that Israel's trade with Pretoria constitutes less than one-half of 1 percent of South Africa's exports and three-quarters of 1 percent of Israel's imports. Nor that trade between South Africa and the twenty-five black African states totaled more than $1.5 billion in 1981, according to the Associated Press. Nor that Arab oil exports alone to South Africa come to at least ten times as much as Israel's total exports to South Africa. Cockburn ends by recommending an obscure California publication called *Israeli Foreign Affairs* to those who would further enhance the kind of education in which he is involved.

I canceled my subscription to *The Nation* some time ago and picked up the August issue only because I was attracted by the cover story on K.A.L. 007 (which also turned out to be badly done and uninformative). The Cockburn article confirms my decision as correct. *Helen Marmor*

## COCKBURN REPLIES

*New York City*

Helen Marmor's reading of the data issued by the International Institute for Strategic Studies is peculiar. The I.I.S.S.'s current *Military Balance* lists every weapon in South Africa's arsenal, and many of them have been bought from Israel, made under Israeli license or, as in the case of the Scorpion helicopter, made in partnership with Israel. Supposedly French Mirage aircraft were made in South Africa from blueprints stolen by Israeli agents, [redacted] parts supplied by Israel. Marmo[redacted]ns Italy. That country's last arms [redacted]th South Africa, in 1979, was routed to South Africa via Israel, which scarcely demonstrates Israel's scrupulous support of the U.N. embargo of 1977. Israel's defiance of the embargo has been reported on innumerable occasions by such unobscure sources as *The New York Times* and *The Sunday Times* of London. Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir recently had to face questions on this topic from American Jewish leaders, to whom he insisted that good relations between Israel and South Africa had to be maintained.

The celebrated case of Israeli involvement in the smuggling into South Africa of the 155-millimeter howitzer (useful in attacking Angola), which was investigated by the U.S. government, began in 1976 and continued after the imposition of the embargo. This howitzer is nuclear capable, which brings us to one of the most signal violations of the embargo, in 1979, when Israeli technological expertise helped South Africa test its first nuclear warhead.

The figure of $419 million was charitable to Israel, and given the size of Israel's economy, Marmor is hardly buttressing her case by citing statistics from the United States and other countries with trillion-dollar G.N.P.s. To compare Israel's trade with South Africa, voluntary and despicable, with the *force majeure* dealings of black African nations is disingenuous, unless Marmor wishes to argue that Israel is under similar duress. And, to take just one example, by helping train the Mozambiquan *contras* sponsored by South Africa, Israel is diminishing the chances of a black African nation to resist South African economic domination. So far as Arab comparisons are concerned, does Marmor wish to place Israel on the same scale as the Saudi royal family in discussing the morals of trade?

*Alexander Cockburn*

## NOT SO FAST

*Sharpsburg, Md.*

In his September 14 "Minority Report," Christopher Hitchens displays the kind of double standard that is too frequently encountered in the pages of *The Nation*. Hitchens speculates that François Mitterrand's involvement in the Greenpeace affair may have been at least sanctioned by Washington. Given the animosity generated by New Zealand's recent policies concerning U.S. nuclear forces, Hitchens is correct in stating that "we ought to be asking whether the Auckland bomb was the realization of [an American] threat." Quite so: let us ask, and seek solid evidence that this was the case. But he then proceeds to make a very serious charge—that Mitterrand "knew, and was assured, that he was acting as a proxy in the matter"—without offering a shred of evidence beyond his general observations on the relationship of France to the United States.

This sort of logic ("the answer must be" and "the operation must have seemed") is precisely the type used by the radical anti-Soviet crowd when it argues, for instance, that the Soviet Union must be the source of the so-called world terrorism network. It is clear that the French secret service was responsible for the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior, just as it is clear that Mehmet Ali Agca shot John Paul II. But it is an equally impermissible leap of faith to assume that, therefore, the former action originated in Washington as to assume automatically that the latter originated in Moscow.

In making this logical leap, Hitchens slips into a tactical style that he and *The Nation* generally condemn, and rightly, when it is employed by the right. In so doing, he undermines the credibility of his otherwise accurate and valuable observations on France's disgraceful and criminal behavior in the South Pacific. *Matt Oja*

## HITCHENS REPLIES

*Washington*

Good point. But sometimes, and especially when dealing with the utter secrecy and ruthlessness of the nuclear state, one has to ask questions rather than answer them. When I wrote my column, the French government was still denying all but the most indirect responsibility. Now that they have admitted to giving the order, I still want to know who sanctioned attacks on an Anzus nation *without* the permission or knowledge of the acronym's last two letters. If it had been a matter of a Gaullist regime, I might have believed that the Greenpeace murder was committed for the glory of France alone. As it is, the silence of the Reagan Administration and the raucously pro-French stand of Jeane Kirkpatrick mean that I must reiterate my questions, and in a form that implies the likelihood of certain answers.

*Christopher Hitchens*

## AUTHOR'S QUERY

For a book on Joan Robinson and the North Americans, I would appreciate hearing from anyone who studied with her in Cambridge, had correspondence with her, entertained her or visited with her on her trips to North America. I would particularly appreciate any photographs of her taken on this continent.

*Marjorie S. Turner*
*Box 8005*
*Black Butte Ranch*
*Sisters, OR 97759*

## AUTHOR'S QUERY

I'm keeping a list of contemporary clichés, and to this end would like to hear from any *Nation* reader who knows how "hidden agenda," "conspiracy theory" and "trickle-down theory" were put into circulation.

*Ned Carleton*
*Box 207*
*Barre, VT 05641*

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in return for three Israelis. Everyone blames us for the killings on the West Bank since then. Israelis are saying we're soft on terrorism. It's a bad time to negotiate with the King.

PERES: You're right. We've got to reassure the country that we're tough, as tough as Begin, as tough as Sharon. It's the only way we can make peace. Think of a plan, and don't worry about the Americans. They'll complain, but they won't do anything. When I go to Washington, Reagan will understand if I tell him we had to kill some Arabs to promote peace.

Since he became Prime Minister, last year, Peres has routinely maintained that he is interested in peace but contends that his hands are tied as long as he stays in a coalition with the right-wing Likud Party. Even more troubling, under the terms of Peres's coalition agreement with Likud, he must relinquish his office next summer. Likud will take over the government for two years, during which time the fragile prospect of a peace settlement may vanish forever, as both Peres and King Hussein know.

Israeli political observers have long been saying that late 1985 would be the optimum time for Peres to make his bid. He has used his tenure in office to consolidate his leadership, and the longer he delays breaking up the coalition, the more vulnerable he becomes to criticism that he reneged on the original deal. Given the distribution of power in the Knesset, Peres knows he cannot form a government of his own without holding elections. He may well have reasoned that the bombing of Tunis, like Begin's 1981 bombing of a nuclear reactor in Baghdad, will modify his dovish reputation, which has been a handicap in appealing to Israel's increasingly hawkish electorate, and make him what he has never been, a popular vote-getter.

That's the benign scenario. Now let's look at another:

PERES: King Hussein sounds as if he is ready to talk, and we have to treat him as a serious threat. He's about to go to America, and he has a way with Americans.

RABIN: The worst part is that Reagan says the Americans are going to sell him antiaircraft missiles. If Reagan does that, we'll have trouble ever teaching Amman a lesson.

PERES: We've got to stop Hussein from turning Reagan's head with sweet-talk. If the Jordanians ever get us to the negotiating table, the Americans will want us to swallow the Reagan plan. They'll take the West Bank from us and give it to the Palestinians.

RABIN: I've got an idea. When Arafat was talking peace a few years ago, Sharon bombed the P.L.O. headquarters in Beirut. When the P.L.O. didn't retaliate, he invaded Lebanon. You've got to hand it to Sharon. He knew how to deal with the threat of a political settlement. I vote for going straight to the P.L.O. headquarters in Tunis.

PERES: Tunis? The Americans put the P.L.O. in Tunisia to get them out of our range. They'll be furious if we bomb Tunis, particularly if we do it while Hussein is in Washington.

RABIN: I know the Americans. They won't do anything. And Hussein's visit is the best time. Reagan will admire the bombing, and Hussein will be so embarrassed in the eyes of the Arab world that he'll have to put his peace campaign in reverse.

PERES: But won't Hussein then get the arms he wants?

RABIN: On the contrary, we'll persuade the Americans that Israel engaged in a justifiable act of self-defense, and our lobbyists will show again how dangerous it is to give the Arabs arms.

The second scenario might seem farfetched to some, except for the rich precedent. Peres, for all his dovishness, is as obsessed with the P.L.O. as Begin and Sharon ever were. He has consistently made clear he prefers no peace at all to a peace made with the P.L.O. He has greeted the overtures that King Hussein conveyed from Arafat not as an opening to negotiations nor as a victory for Israel's steadfastness but as a threat to Israel's soul.

The murders in Larnaca look much like the assassination attempt on an Israeli in London in 1982 which led to Sharon's invasion of Lebanon. The P.L.O. denied responsibility for the London shooting, and British courts later convicted a team of Palestinian extremists who were opposed to the moderate views of the P.L.O. leadership. But Begin and Sharon were not interested in evidence then, nor is Peres now. Israel has become Captain Ahab in its determination to destroy the P.L.O.

The sequence that in 1982 led from London to Lebanon demonstrated how hard-line forces among Arabs and Israelis effectively collude against a peace settlement. Since then, negotiating initiatives taken by Hussein and Arafat have had to compete against a steadily rising level of terror. The meaning of the latest episode, the hijacking of an Italian cruise ship in the Mediterranean, seems clearly to be that Arafat is losing control of the situation. Is it simply bizarre, or perversely logical, that the principal collaborators in this chain reaction are the P.L.O. renegades who hijacked the ship and the sovereign state of Israel, the bomber of Tunis? This complicity between enemies is destroying the last slim hopes for peace.

MILTON VIORST

*Milton Viorst, a writer specializing in the Middle East, is working on a book on Arab-Israeli relations.*

## FOLLOW-UP

We take no joy in reporting that a prediction we made in an editorial in February has come true. Last week, the Reagan Administration announced the U.S. withdrawal from the jurisdiction of the World Court. A State Department spokesman explained solemnly that continued participation would "endanger our vital national interests." The Administration was miffed because the Court ruled that it had jurisdiction to hear Nicaragua's complaints against the United States. The Court symbolizes the ideal of world law; the Administration has now endorsed the principle of state lawlessness.

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# BEAT THE DEVIL.

## First World to Third: Drop Dead

Debt is what leads people to starve, and debt is what leads people to rebel; it is the most potent political factor in the world today. The annual report of the International Monetary Fund, released on September 24, was therefore of great interest. The I.M.F. firmly rejected the growing Third World clamor for fresh infusions of capital and debt renegotiation and insisted that its previous policies of demanding deflation, austerity and export surpluses in the debtor countries have been correct. This is the stone-bottomed policy that the I.M.F.—essentially the industrialized nations, dominated by the United States—was proposing to take to its annual meeting with the World Bank, which started in Seoul, South Korea, on October 8.

The London *Financial Times* for September 25 made the I.M.F. report its lead story and devoted most of an inside page to extracts from the report, which called on developing countries to adopt a policy of "prudent demand management" (i.e., fierce cuts in living standards which will cause intense misery and provoke political upheavals) and to continue to boost exports (i.e., pay off the Western banks, whatever the internal cost). The newspaper also commented on the report in its lead editorial, remarking that "the cost of debt throughout the world is currently being inflated by the vast credit demands of the world's strongest economy, the U.S. America is one debtor which the fund seems powerless to influence; hence the IMF is increasingly seen at the moment not as an adjustment agency, but as a debt collector for western and predominantly American banks."

So how did the major U.S. media react to the I.M.F. report? Readers of *The Wall Street Journal* for September 25 were given an intimation of the report's existence in the form of four inconsequential paragraphs on page 3. *The New York Times* gave it seven short paragraphs, similarly inconsequential, on the bottom of page 6 of its Business Day section. Of the articles I saw, only Hobart Rowen's in *The Washington Post* gave it substantial coverage, and even that gave readers little idea of how the I.M.F. was proposing to confront the future. All three networks ignored the report.

The amazing inattention given the I.M.F. report was then replaced by traditional mystification as the Seoul conference drew near. Anyone glancing quickly at the various versions of Treasury Secretary James A. Baker 3d's proposals to push leading commercial banks into boosting loans to certain Third World countries might have supposed that U.S. policy on international lending had entered an era of selfless chivalry. Not so far down in each of the stories, one found the usual realities embalmed in language about the loans being conditional on the developing countries' shift to "market-oriented economic policies to foster growth," as one of the wire service stories from Seoul put it. In other words, Baker, in politer language, is endorsing fundamentally the same I.M.F. criteria that have brought the developing countries to their knees. After all, the sum Baker has been discussing is about $30 billion in increased loans from private banks and government institutions, which is not very much when set against the total external debt of the developing world of about $1,000 billion.

Why is U.S. coverage of the world debt crisis and the policies of the Reagan Administration and the private banks toward it so scandalously lacking? I suppose the editors and reporters aren't trained to look beyond the latest moves of T. Boone Pickens or Carl Icahn. Only when bread riots break out in Guatemala or Brazil do they see something amiss. The moment at which the I.M.F. essentially orders up those bread riots escapes them.

## The Proximate Mirror

The scandalous affair of Joan Peters's *From Time Immemorial* is discussed by Edward W. Said on page 381 of this issue, but the following correspondence is highly germane. Peters's book, designed to deprive the Palestinians of their heritage, was given splendid endorsements by various persons of prominence in U.S. intellectual life, along with similarly flattering reviews. In England, as Said relates, it was given informed and unsparing criticism. Having demolished it in an essay (co-authored by his son) in the *London Review of Books*, Sir Ian Gilmour, *inter alia* a Conservative M.P., wrote to some of Peters's admirers, including Barbara Tuchman and Saul Bellow, asking if they might care to reconsider their endorsements in the light of misrepresentations discovered in the book. One consequence was this exchange:

August 2, 1985

Dear Sir Ian,

I am glad you wrote to me because it gives me an opportunity to comment on the concerted campaign in England of villification [*sic*] of Mrs. Peters' book. I think it is clear from your statement and from other reviews I have read that the attitude toward her work is discomfort in England at being reminded, and having the public reminded, of the English betrayal of the Balfour Declaration by the deliberate promotion of Arab settlement in what was supposed to have been, according to the British promise, "a national home" for the Jews, followed by the shameful role played by Britain in Palestine from the White Paper in 1939 through the ramming of the *Exodus* and the encouragement of the Arab's [*sic*] attack on Israel in 1948, the whole of this sorry history representing the least admirable, not to say the most deplorable episode of British history in modern times. Mrs. Peters, having unkindly exposed this story to historical light, has earned the vicious scorn and scolding of British critics.

The element that I miss in all these reviews is any specific charge with citation and reference giving us examples of how Mrs. Peters "manipulated her evidence" as you put it. Because you and fellow reviewers simply state that she did so without citing any examples fails to convince me and certainly fails to persuade me to "modify", as you suggest, my view of her book. As a historian I have long known better than to accept empty declarations of a case without documentary evidence.

Further, I would suggest that some of the animus apparent in your and other reviews reflects the growing anti-semitism that for the past few years has been visibly developing in Britain.

You are quite right in assuming that I am "unwilling to

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

make any kind of retraction" of my praise of Mrs. Peters [*sic*] book, and I do not believe I have "misled" anyone who recognizes the factors that have entered into this controversy.

Sincerely yours,
Barbara Tuchman

c.c. Michael Joseph
Editor, Times Literary Supplement

18th September 1985

Dear Miss Tuchman,

Thank you for your letter. It does something to clear up the mystery of how a distinguished historian could have lavished praise upon Joan Peters's preposterous book *From Time Immemorial*. On the Arab-Israeli issue your standards are evidently much the same as hers. You repeat Mrs. Peters's ridiculous allegations about "English betrayal of the Balfour Declaration and the deliberate promotion of Arab settlement. . . ." There was in fact no English betrayal of the Balfour Declaration and no promotion, deliberate or otherwise, of Arab settlement. Have you read the Balfour Declaration recently or merely relied upon Mrs. Peters's misreading of it?

Your suggestion that the British reception of *From Time Immemorial* was influenced by a desire to defend British policy in Palestine from 1917 to 1948 shows, to say the least, a curious idea of the attitude of British reviewers. Your allegation of growing anti-semitism in England is even less well founded. Leaving aside the fact that such an allegation is the stock response of Zionist propagandists who are unable to counter their opponents' arguments, do you as a historian seriously think that opposition to the Zionist movement's dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs is so perverse and unreasonable that it must stem from anti-semitism? That would surely be a failure of historical imagination (and humanity) on a truly heroic scale. Moreover there has always been less anti-semitism in England than in America.

In any case it is futile to look for complicated explanations of the unfavourable reception in Britain of *From Time Immemorial*, when the true reason is glaringly simple. The book is stiff with errors and nonsense, and as it was mostly reviewed over here by people with knowledge of the subject they noticed them.

Your statement that none of the British reviews gave examples of how Mrs. Peters "manipulated her evidence" is, quite simply, false. Some of the reviews consisted of little else. And if after you have read the Balfour Declaration you read our review you will see that your remark is as untrue as most of those in Mrs. Peters's book. Like a number of other reviewers my son and I gave detailed examples of manipulation. To repeat four of them briefly, we showed (1) how she misrepresented the Hope Simpson Report and changed its sense by leaving out words and altering the punctuation, (2) how she used the Ottoman census figures when they suited her purposes and discarded them when they contradicted her thesis, (3) how she relied on a medieval Arab historian for information on the nineteenth century and (4) how she used a survey of a hundred Palestinian refugees from the 1967 war to "prove" a completely different point about the entire Palestinian refugee population of 1948. These of course are far from the only examples, but they are enough to prove our charge. Mrs. Peters could, I suppose, say that she had not manipulated the evidence, that she was not experienced in these matters and that it had all happened by mistake. But that is not a defence open to you, since you made high claims for the book and even talked about "Joan Peters's unrelenting research".

It is still puzzling that you, Mr. Bellow—I wrote to him, too, but he, perhaps prudently, has chosen not to defend himself—and many others gave such extravagant puffs to *From Time Immemorial*, which as one American professor wrote to us, is a book that should have been "disavowed by Zionists and non-Zionists alike." Your claim of "a concerted campaign in England of vilification of Mrs. Peters's book" is worthy of Mrs. Peters in both its tone and its inaccuracy. There does seem, however, to have been a fairly successful effort to stop the truth being told about the book in the United States. But now that the truth is known, your continued refusal to admit to the American reading public how gravely you misled them would be inexcusable.

Yours sincerely,
Ian Gilmour

P.S. In sending a copy of your letter to the *Times Literary Supplement*, you have confused that publication with the *London Review of Books*. I will abide by your decision to make our correspondence public.

## The Best Tunes

I open my mail. I find a letter from the International Socialist Organization. It begins:

> Dear Sir or Madam,
> The future looks bleak: Racist repression in South Africa. Mass starvation in Ethiopia. Near-record poverty rates in the U.S. . . . Racist and sexist oppression is a fact of everyday life. Is there any way out?

What's the matter with the left? How about:

> Dear Sir or Madam,
> The future looks great: White slavers on the run in South Africa. The opening of a revolutionary era in Ethiopia. Popular rage in the U.S. Racist and sexist oppression under attack everywhere.

You don't get far by making people feel bad. My father used to quote sadly the old Communist Party recruiter back in the 1930s: "Brothers and sisters, even as I speak our comrades in Latin America are writhing in the torturers' thumbscrews, our comrades in India starving in the stinking jails of British imperialism, our comrades in Africa groaning under the boot of the oppressor. Brothers and sisters, join the Communist Party."

## Vox Pox

Up front in the latest issue of one of my least favorite magazines, *Vanity Fair*, we find a column by Tristan Vox, attacking Nora Ephron for child abuse. This is the magazine that celebrated suspected wife-abuser Claus von Bülow. But who is Tristan Vox? None other than Leon Wieseltier, literary editor of *The New Republic* and hereby recipient of the Jeane Kirkpatrick Moral Equivalence Award, a handsomely bound set of the works of Jean-François Revel.

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# UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

I read in an Associated Press interview with John Z. DeLorean that he now talks "as if emerging from a long illness, a disease called egomania." Apparently, he had quite a bout of it. I gather from the A.P. piece that he's feeling better now—the newspaper I saw ran the piece under the headline "DeLorean Is Recovering Slowly From Divorce, Loss of Company"—but he still seems to require regular doses of evangelical Christianity and humble pie in order to avoid a recurrence. Swallowing his medicine right in front of the A.P. reporter, DeLorean said, "I believe I deserve what happened to me," leaving open for the moment the question of whether the investors and employees deserve what happened to them. Naturally, I was relieved to hear that DeLorean is out of the woods; it's a pity, though, that the disease wasn't diagnosed and treated at an earlier stage. When someone is coming down with egomania, there must be symptoms that an alert diagnostician can spot: model-dating, maybe, or cosmetic surgery, or a tendency to name things after oneself.

I suppose a lot of people were surprised to read that egomania was a disease. Not me. I realize, of course, that it's not the sort of disease you can get reimbursed for on the office medical plan, or the kind of disease you can mention to the boss as the reason you didn't come in for a couple of days ("So I, in my superb wisdom, decided to get into a toga, and by the time I found a pedestal worthy of having me stand on it . . . "). Still, it has become clear to me that these days there are a lot of diseases that the diagnosticians of simpler times might have missed while under the impression that what they were witnessing was just rotten behavior. The talk shows are stuffed full of sufferers who have regained their health—Congressmen who suffered through a serious spell of boozing and skirt-chasing, White House aides who were stricken cruelly with overweening ambition, movie stars and baseball players who came down with acute cases of wanting to trash hotel rooms while under the influence of recreational drugs. Most of them have found God, or at least a publisher.

When I hear that one of the recovered is going to be interviewed on television, I always tune in. I have a taste for the sordid stuff. As I read in the newspapers about all of the business executives these days whose corporations have, in the normal course of business, kited checks and bribed foreign governments and bilked the Defense Department and diddled the books, I am cheered by the thought that in a year or so, if the usual publication schedules work out, we'll be able to see them on television, thanking the Lord for their cures and acknowledging the concerned inquiries of the host about the current state of their health ("Well, Steve, it's like emerging from a disease called untrammeled greed").

In simpler times, a business executive who was caught following a number of corporate policies that happened to be felonious would have had a completely different response: he did it for the stockholders. He had a sacred obligation to make certain that the stockholders had the greatest possible return on their investment, and avoiding huge disposal costs by simply dumping the chemical wastes out behind the shed was one way of fulfilling that obligation. In those days, every corporation executive had a good angel on one shoulder ("I know how old Ted McNeil, who built this company, would have approached this question, because Ted knew every man on the line by his first name and believed that quality was the only . . . ") and on the other shoulder 80,000 stockholders yelling, "Cheat, bribe, pollute, steal, kick, bite, scratch!"

According to the accepted model of that era, the president of, say, Stinko Chemicals would have, if left to his own inclinations, priced industrial-strength sewer cleaner at just slightly above what it cost the company to manufacture it, which might put the price at about 18 cents a barrel. But then he thinks of a stockholder, a widow in a small town in Georgia who has her husband's insurance money in Stinko shares. He imagines her going out to the mailbox to pick up her dividend check, opening the envelope with great anticipation and then looking pathetically dejected as she realizes that the dividend has gone down and that she will have to abandon her one remaining pleasure—playing the slots at the Legion hall on Friday nights. So he prices the barrel of sewer cleaner at $34.95. As it happens, $34.95 a barrel is the price that four of his competitors are charging. The president of Stinko knows that old Ted McNeil would have undercut the competition ("We'll build it better, and we'll sell it cheaper, and we won't compromise on . . ."), but he is also aware that he has that widow from Georgia and 79,999 other widows tap-dancing on his other shoulder. So he gets together with his four competitors and fixes the price. If he gets caught, he can tell the truth: he did it for the stockholders.

That's not the way it works now. When the new malefactors have their go at the airwaves, they'll have to talk about the illnesses they managed to conquer. "I found that I was a compulsive briber," one of them might say to the interviewer. "And if the Lord hadn't cured me I'd probably be laying ten bucks on you right now to get a better camera angle." The others, recovered from afflictions like egomania and chronic hyperambition, will nod in sympathy, like people at a prayer meeting who can empathize with the reformed drunk even though gambling happens to be their own cross. The interviewer will give them his forgiveness and bless their books.

I'll be watching, and not just for the sordid stuff. I have long entertained the fantasy that some interviewer someday is going to turn to one of the recovered sufferers and say, "But isn't this just another way of saying that you're a wretched little worm who acted despicably just to rise in your dreadful firm or impress the girls?" Of course, the recoveree will simply say, "Yes, you're right. I was suffering from wormlike behavior. I deserve everything that happened to me."

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# ARTICLES.

GERMANY'S SPY FLAP

# Through the Looking-Glass War

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

Only John le Carré, who served as a British intelligence officer in Bonn, could have invented the grotesquely overweight, debt-ridden and wretchedly harassed Hans-Joachim Tiedge, the senior counterespionage official from the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, West Germany's Federal Bureau of Investigation, who fled to East Berlin in August. The procession of spies and counterspies between East and West Germany resembles a medieval tapestry. The action is ceaseless, but in the end everyone seems to stay in the same place.

What has been overlooked in the discussions of espionage the Tiedge affair provoked in the press is how few state secrets there are. The intelligence services of East and West are obsessed with scrutinizing their opposite numbers; the gathering of military and political information has become secondary. When I watched the splendid British television adaptation of le Carré's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, which depicts treachery in the British secret service, I was reminded of the cabals and intrigues at Oxford University, where I taught for a time. (The British agents had ancient university accents and manners, and all the episodes included shots of Oxford's spires.) Academic intrigue at Oxford has nothing to do with education, just as conflict within British intelligence has little to do with secrets. Art for art's sake, or at least sport for sport's sake. Amateurism prevails in international espionage, and even those switching sides are utterly devoted to the game.

In July, Washington announced that K.G.B. officer Vitaly Yurchenko had defected to the West in Rome (meeting the C.I.A. in a Vatican chapel, showing that he, too, reads spy novels). He was described as one of the top five officials in the K.G.B., but does anyone really know? Many agents who defect understandably insist on their indispensability. Suppose he is part of a clever plot, designed to confuse C.I.A. operations.

In fact, Western and Soviet agents and counteragents spend most of their time spying on one another. They have little else to do. None of the West German defectors could tell East German or Soviet intelligence anything it had not already read in the West German press. It is true that one of the recent émigrés was involved in maintaining the Bonn government's command bunker, to which officials will repair in the event of a nuclear war. In a nuclear war, though, the West German government's commands will be about as relevant as those of the government of Oklahoma.

Then there was the engineer in a Munich aircraft factory who confessed some time ago that he had shipped eastward the plans for the Tornado, a European-built jet fighter. One thing is certain: the Warsaw Pact nations won't use the plans to build the plane. The Tornado has nearly exhausted the Defense Ministry's budget. As for its vaunted terrain-hugging capabilities, the pilots who fly it have refused to trust its electronic guidance system. And its downward-looking radar has a minor drawback: it cannot penetrate clouds. The other Germany's military intelligence didn't need the engineer to tell them all this; they had only to observe the Tornado's flights during NATO maneuvers.

Even when an intelligence service does come up with valuable information, it is often ignored. In 1941, Stalin refused to accept the overwhelming evidence that the Germans were planning to invade. The Israelis ignored data collected by their spies about Egyptian and Syrian preparations for the 1973 Yom Kippur war. And when, on the Friday before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Pacific Fleet's intelligence officer reported that he had lost track of four Japanese aircraft carriers, the admiral in command joked, Do you mean that they could be rounding Diamond Head at any moment? His staff laughed appreciatively.

In short, then, the reality of intelligence is far more sobering than media accounts of spy scandals suggest. The East German and Soviet institutes patiently researching Western politics and society are more valuable to their regimes than battalions of spies. In the C.I.A. the only people who merit

DRAWINGS BY BILL LOGAN

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the designations of "intelligent" are the massed ranks of its Ph.D.s, who often do a good job of analyzing foreign politics. Indeed, they are better at it than the academics in residence at U.S. research centers or universities, many of whom feel obliged to engage in a certain amount of political trimming, since they seek government consultancies and posts. The C.I.A. experts, after all, already work for the government.

The reporting on the Tiedge affair in this country has also systematically ignored its political context. The counterintelligence agent's boss at the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, who explained that he had been loath to fire Tiedge because he had feared the man might have a breakdown or flee to the East, was Heribert Hellenbroich. "We do not have preventive detention in an open society," he said. Shortly before Tiedge departed, Hellenbroich was appointed head of the Federal Intelligence Service—the Bundesnachrichtendienst, or B.N.D.—the West German equivalent of the C.I.A. The B.N.D. has not performed brilliantly recently, and Hellenbroich was transferred there because he was competent and a Christian Democrat.

But there was another reason. He had irritated his superior, Minister of the Interior Friedrich Zimmermann, a member of Franz-Josef Strauss's Free Democratic Party; and also Chancellor Helmut Kohl's office. He had done so out of a rigorous conception of public duty. Hellenbroich's fall from grace came about in this way. His second-in-command was Stefan Pelny, a cultivated and cosmopolitan figure with a Yale law degree who is strenuously devoted to the cause of civil liberties. Pelny owes his post to the West German custom that the opposition (in this case, the Social Democrats) names a senior official of the agency. When the Chancellor's office requested files on leaders of the Green Party and the peace movement, Pelny strengthened Hellenbroich's instinct to refuse the request; the same when Zimmermann and his zealots demanded an unconstitutional surveillance of the left. By transferring Hellenbroich to the B.N.D., Zimmermann and Kohl no doubt hoped to gain a more pliable successor. When the Tiedge affair exploded, they used it as a pretext to dismiss Hellenbroich as head of the B.N.D., thus achieving revenge for his earlier obduracy.

Kohl and Zimmermann responded to the Tiedge affair with a shrill counteroffensive, the latter demanding restrictions on civil liberties. The West German people, however, remained tranquil, in part because they have become used to blunders by the Kohl government. Also, they accept that a certain amount of vulnerability to Communist penetration is the price they have to pay not only to prevent the recurrence of a police state but to permit some freedom of movement between the two Germanys. Just last month when Willy Brandt and Strauss visited East Germany, many West German newspapers commented that it was reassuring that the Tiedge affair had not disrupted such contacts.

There are aspects of the defections that suggest matters may be more complicated than they seem. The East German spy master, Gen. Markus Wolf, has been treated by the Western (including American) press with totemic respect. Wolf grew up in the Soviet Union, the son of an émigré German Communist. It isn't certain whether his primary loyalty is to the German Communist state or to the Soviet Union. Some of the recent defectors worked for West German politicians who favor rapprochement between the two Germanys. The entire sequence began with the flight east of a secretary for the chair of the Free Democratic Party, Economics Minister Martin Bangemann. It has ended, for the moment, with the departure for East Berlin of Herbert Willner, a longtime associate of Free Democratic Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. In between, a well-placed secretary in the office of Federal President Richard von Weizsaecker was charged with espionage. Genscher and the Free Democrats are conspicuous for their insistence on détente. Von Weizsaecker, to the visible irritation of some in his own Christian Democratic Party, has repeatedly declared that West Germany's future lies between the superpowers, not exclusively with one of them. There are, no doubt, powerful groups in the Soviet bloc who think that no good can come for them from improved relations between the two Germanys—or, for that matter, from West German détente with the Soviet Union. In this world, everything is what it seems to be and its opposite: all the usual philosophical bets are off.

It is equally plausible that the serial defections were timed to coincide with the departure for Washington of a delegation led by Kohl's national security adviser, Horst Teltschik. The delegation came to negotiate West German participation in the Strategic Defense Initiative. What better time to remind West Germany's big brother that its smaller sibling cannot always be counted on?

My own contacts with the dramatis personae in the Tiedge affair are illuminating. Last December, Herbert Willner, who was in charge of security policy and inter-German relations at the Free Democrats' Friedrich Naumann Foundation, was present at a conference on German reunification. There were two speakers from the United States: William Griffith, now senior adviser to the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, and me. Willner had only praise for Griffith's stringent assertions that nothing had changed or would change the division of Europe. He reproached me for entertaining illusions about the East German regime. Now I understand the authority with which Willner spoke. He was among those who followed Tiedge to East Germany. Recently, his foundation's Washington office informed me that our intelligence agencies have matters under control. The office has received no postal deliveries of any kind since Willner fled. Our own security services must now wonder about our friend Griffith. After all, what better cover for a Soviet agent than a rigorously anti-Soviet line?

Meanwhile, no satirist can do justice to reality. Our Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Arthur Hartman, opposes substituting American personnel for the Soviet citizens who work at the embassy. True, his driver is a K.G.B. colonel, but that facilitates communication with the Soviet government. Also, Americans as clerks, drivers and secretaries would be susceptible to K.G.B. temptation. Better to employ known agents than Americans whom one can't

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be sure of. It only remains for Hartman to suggest that his C.I.A. station chief and the K.G.B. section head for the United States exchange places.

Some of my colleagues at Georgetown University would no doubt criticize me for treating serious matters with so much levity. Certainly Dr. Ray Cline of the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies would. Cline thinks that we could restrict some of our freedoms in the interest of national security. He is a former C.I.A. station chief and special adviser to the U.S. Embassy in Bonn. His counterparts in the Brandt government remember him as an agreeable chap. They had only to take him to dinner at a restaurant with a good wine cellar, they said, to learn what the agency was up to in West Germany. *In vino veritas.* East Berlin is not a scintillating place. West Berlin is quite lively. Shouldn't someone invite Gen. Markus Wolf over the wall to dinner? □

ROTTEN AT THE CORPS

# Officers' Mafia In El Salvador

KENNETH E. SHARPE

Suppose a group of high-ranking U.S. officers conspired with a domestic arms manufacturer to pilfer hundreds of thousands of dollars through a rigged contract. Say that as part of the deal, the company bought cheap, faulty Yugoslavian ammunition, relabeled it "Made in the U.S.A." and sold it to El Salvador. If the public found out about the scam, there would be an outcry and calls for an immediate investigation and the punishment of the guilty parties.

Such a transaction did take place in 1983, only the officers were Salvadoran, not American. The affair evoked little comment either in the United States or in El Salvador. A Justice Department probe was launched more than a year and a half ago, but it has yet to produce an indictment. What the officers did was shocking, but in El Salvador it was business as usual.

Recent interviews with Salvadorans living in the United States and with one Colonel Reyes, a former senior officer who asked that his name not be used and whose information has proved reliable in the past, suggest that the case is only one example of how the Salvadoran officer corps, or much of it, functions as a mafia in uniform. Reports by journalists and U.S. and Salvadoran officials confirm this view. Such mafiosi have no interest in the kind of negotiated settlement that could end the current bloody stalemate; those in Washington who say they back the military in the hope of

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providing breathing space for the democratic reforms proclaimed by President José Napoleón Duarte have bedded down with dangerous allies.

Salvadoran military and paramilitary forces have been brutal in their repression of dissent and reform, and savage against civilian noncombatants in their prosecution of the war. After the brief political opening created by the reformist officers' coup in October 1979, the actions of the military and the death squads, which often do its bidding, convinced centrists and leftists seeking peaceful reform to turn to armed insurgency. Since then, as many as 60,000 Salvadorans have been killed, the vast majority of them by the armed forces. Congressional pressure in 1983 convinced the military to rein in the death squads and support Duarte's election as the price for massive U.S. aid. But Amnesty International's June 1985 report finds that death squad activity and torture continue and accuses the Salvadoran government of "gross violations" of human rights through indiscriminate air attacks on civilians.

But little serious attention is paid to the corruption of the Salvadoran military. Although many will readily admit that, of course, it is corrupt, corruption being a natural characteristic of Third World militaries, few realize how essential such corruption is to the institution, and how hypocritical and unrealistic that makes U.S. policy.

The officer corps' role in Salvadoran society traditionally has been to provide upward mobility for ambitious young men in a rigid, oligarchical social structure. To enter the Gerardo Barrios Military School one must be recommended by a high-ranking officer; children from military men's families get preferential treatment, creating a military caste. The harsh demands of military academy life cause each cadet to form close bonds with his *tanda*, or graduating class, and those ties are strengthened after graduation, as the officers rise through the ranks together, often becoming godfathers to one another's children. Each *tanda*—some U.S. diplomats call them mafia families—has a president. During their thirty-year military career many officers make contacts and form alliances with other *tandas* in preparation for assuming high-level government posts.

At the apex of this system is the secretive Armed Forces Security Council. Col. Roberto Santivanez, former head of El Salvador's intelligence agency and now a critic of the military, has explained to *The Christian Science Monitor* that the council is composed of seven to ten members of the most powerful *tandas* and includes the Army Chief of Staff, the Defense Minister, the Vice Minister of Defense and the heads of the Air Force, Treasury Police, National Police and National Guard. In an Op-Ed article in *The Boston Globe*, Leonel Gomez, who in 1980 was the deputy director of the government land reform agency and who fled to the United States after his boss was assassinated for denouncing military corruption, writes:

> For five years council members dictate policy and oversee every action of the Army and security forces. And for five prosperous years, the council members and their allies within the armed forces will become fabulously wealthy through systematic corruption, fraud and kickbacks. At the end of five years, the council members retire, and the next class of *tanda* leaders move in to take their place.

Junior officers are poorly paid and lead a hard, dangerous life in the field, but when they reach the rank of major or lieutenant colonel, lucrative opportunities for small-scale graft open up. In April of last year Colonel Santivanez told reporters for *The Washington Post* about a port commander who received thousands of dollars in kickbacks from shrimp fishermen who need his stamp of approval to sell their shrimp. Local commanders stationed along the Guatemalan and Honduran borders exact private import fees of as much as several thousand dollars a month from trucking companies, he said. A senior U.S. diplomat told former *New York Times* correspondent Raymond Bonner, "By the time you get to be a lieutenant colonel, people are offering you nice little business deals, or you're military attaché somewhere and smuggling like a champ."

But the big money is made by the higher-ups. The largest "businesses" are operated from high-level positions in the government. Two major military sinecures are ANTEL and CEL, the government-owned telephone and power companies, respectively, whose multimillion-dollar equipment contracts involve lucrative kickbacks. "Every time the guerrillas knock out a power pylon, the colonels make 20 percent on each replacement," Colonel Reyes told me. Before the October 1979 coup, which ousted Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero Mena, Lieut. Col. Rene Francisco Guerra y Guerra, one of the initiators of the coup, served briefly as acting general manager of ANTEL. In *Weakness and*


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*Deceit: U.S. Policy and El Salvador*, Bonner reports that on Guerra y Guerra's second day on the job:

> he was approached by the under-secretary of justice, who offered him an $80,000 bribe. The Cabinet official was also a lawyer for a European company that was bidding on a communications equipment contract. A few days later he upped the offer to $120,000. Guerra y Guerra told President Romero about the bribe. Romero responded by dismissing not the justice minister but Guerra y Guerra.

Examining the ANTEL files, "Guerra y Guerra found between $12 million and $18 million in fictitious invoices relating to an earth satellite station."

Perhaps the most notorious pre-1979 case involved the Army Chief of Staff, Col. Manuel Rodriguez, who was arrested when he tried to sell $30 million worth of U.S.-supplied armaments to two Mount Kisco, New York, detectives posing as underworld representatives. Rodriguez's offer so angered the Ford Administration that it suspended aid to El Salvador. The case provided a rare glimpse of the thoroughgoing criminal character of the military: a deal that big had to involve the high command. It was widely known in El Salvador that the President and Defense Minister were in on it.

The coup brought important changes. At first, the Armed Forces Security Council was expanded to include representatives of the younger, more progressive officers who had planned the coup. Those officers were isolated or purged from top positions by late 1980, but ironically the reforms that they and civilian members of the early juntas pushed through (nationalization of the banks and of export trade, and the first stages of land reform) provided new opportunities for plunder, as the state's economic role expanded.

The leftist insurgency, partially triggered by increased military repression, helped create another source of corruption: U.S. aid. Between 1980 and 1985, Washington poured in $1.7 billion in economic and military assistance. How much of the economic aid was pocketed is hard to estimate. There is evidence from a 1984 audit done by the inspector general's office at the United States Agency for International Development that $1.4 million of the $29 million A.I.D. gave to the Agricultural Development Bank was used for unauthorized purposes. But perhaps most significant is the two-step process involving so-called economic support funds, cash transfers for balance of payments support given to El Salvador's central bank, which totaled $585 million between 1980 and 1985.

The first step has been described in a number of U.S. government audits, including one by the General Accounting Office. The cash transfers are supposed to provide dollars so that Salvadoran businessmen can import needed goods. Businessmen buy the dollars they need from the central bank, paying in colons at the official rate, which is much cheaper than buying dollars on the open market. This aspect of the program is clearly a subsidy to the private sector, but the fraud comes in when the businessmen inflate the cost of imports and loot the program of tens of thousands of dollars. A businessman who wanted $50,000 worth of seed would present the bank with an invoice for $75,000. He would pay the $50,000 to the U.S. supplier (or sometimes set up his own fake company in the United States) and deposit the extra $25,000 in a Miami bank account.

Although officers undoubtedly participate in this scam, the colons paid to the central bank for the U.S. dollars make possible the second stage of the scam and provide the boon for the military. Until recently the local currencies raised by these cash transfers went into the government's general revenues and could be used anywhere in the budget because of a special waiver granted by A.I.D. A February 1985 report to the Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus by Representatives Jim Leach and George Miller and Senator Mark Hatfield concluded that one major purpose served by the cash transfer funds was to expand the armed forces. In other words, under the guise of economic aid, the military received tens of millions of dollars for which it did not have to account to any U.S. agency. Criticism by the G.A.O. and members of Congress recently led to a tightening of accounting procedures, but the general problem still remains: by supporting nonmilitary government expenditures in this way, the United States effectively frees up funds for the military, whose use is subject to little scrutiny.

Many are the schemes to siphon off these funds. Bonner explains that the Defense Ministry "routinely filed false reports about the number of bullets that had been fired during a specific period or operation," and U.S. funds to replenish the bullets "went into the pockets of senior officers." Often the unused bullets "were sold to the local civil defense forces or even to the guerrillas." Another scam involves the rations-procurement system. Colonel Reyes explained how it operates: "A brigade commander plans an operation and gets cash to buy rations for each of his men.

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But he inflates the numbers and pockets the difference." Does the Defense Minister know? "Sure he knows. He is in on it too. And the more his subordinates are involved in the corruption, the more control he has over them." Shirley Christian, writing in *The Miami Herald* in 1983, reported, "Each provincial commander has the opportunity . . . to make a profit on the monthly food budget for the 1,000 or so troops under his command."

The illegal sale of military supplies has been another regular source of income. Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White admitted to Congress: "There are reports that I consider reliable that some military officers are selling arms, before they even get out of the crates, to the revolutionaries."

Military procurement offers a fertile field for graft. The Nordac case is a prime example. Rick Pullen in the Fredericksburg, Virginia, *Free-Lance Star* and Howard Kurtz and Edward Cody in *The Washington Post* uncovered the way the sting worked. In 1983 a six-member buying commission from the Salvadoran military authorized a $4.7 million contract with the Nordac Manufacturing Corporation of Fredericksburg which included an order for 19 million rounds of ammunition. The Pentagon paid the bill. Nordac bought the ammunition in Yugoslavia for far less than it was charging the Salvadorans and relabeled the bullets to circumvent a Federal law requiring that they be American-made. Complaints by soldiers that their guns were jamming led to a Justice Department investigation, which unraveled the deal.

Former employees told a Federal grand jury that Nordac stood to make more than $1 million on the contract and that some of the more than $300,000 that Nordac paid in "commissions," part of it in cash, went to Salvadoran officers on the procurement commission. They testified that Nordac shipped large amounts of U.S. currency to El Salvador in the spring of 1984 on a cargo plane carrying one of the arms shipments and that the wife of a high-ranking Salvadoran military officer came to the United States earlier that year allegedly to pick up a cash payment for the procurement officers. The witnesses also told Federal prosecutors that they heard Nordac's president say he might offer jobs to the two senior members of the commission, Col. Elmer Gonzalez Araujo, then an army staff officer, and Col. Jorge Rivera, the Defense Ministry's finance chief, after they retired. Gonzalez Araujo has been written about in U.S. newspapers before. An army unit under his command killed at least eighteen peasants in the well-documented Las Hojas massacre of 1983. U.S. Embassy pressure was a factor in his transfer to the Defense Ministry, where, according to *The New York Times*, he worked closely with U.S. advisers in administering U.S. military aid.

How high responsibility for the scheme goes is still unknown. Deputy Defense Minister Gen. Rafael Flores Lima, who was the Army Chief of Staff at the time of the Nordac deal, ordered the Salvadoran military attaché in Washington to sign the contract, although that officer had notified him of another price quotation, for $1 million less.

The Justice Department probe, headed by Assistant U.S. Attorney Theodore S. Greenberg, has not obtained any indictments. Undoubtedly, some information is difficult to secure. The Armed Forces Security Council will be as unwilling to implicate important "family members" in this case as it was to try the officers who covered up the killing of the four American churchwomen or those who assassinated the two U.S. labor advisers. If the full story were known, it would likely implicate much of the high command and reveal their deep involvement in criminal activities.

Failure to recognize the military's mafia operations yields bad analysis and bad policy and makes a mockery of the Reagan Administration's professed goals of bringing peace and democracy to El Salvador.

Many U.S. officials spoke of a "historic break" between the armed forces and the oligarchy when the military refused to heed the requests by right-wing parties that it annul the March 1985 legislative elections, which Duarte's Christian Democratic Party won. There was a break of sorts, but not for the reasons the observers imagined. The military is willing to oppose the oligarchy on certain issues because it no longer depends on it for kickbacks, graft and job offers upon retirement. There is money to be made off U.S. aid, and to keep the Congressional sluice gates open, the generals must permit elections and allow Duarte and the Christian Democrats to win them.

The military has made a pact with Duarte: We'll let you hold office and control certain ministries and policies (agrarian reform, for example), but there are two areas where we reign supreme—the conduct of the war and the conduct of our business. Corruption is not to be touched, and no one in the family is to be tried, let alone convicted, by civilian courts.

Because the United States closes its eyes to this devil's bargain, its policies are unrealistic. Most of the officers in the high command—there are exceptions—choose tactics that reflect calculations of economic gain and personal safety rather than military logic. Take the promotion system that U.S. advisers have been trying to change. It makes more military sense to promote officers on the basis of combat proficiency than on time in grade, but doing that would challenge the *tanda* system. U.S. advisers have repeatedly recommended that the army use small patrols to fight the guerrillas rather than batallion-sized sweeps. But the brass hats are reluctant. The possibilities for making money on ration-procurement schemes or equipment sales are much greater in large-scale operations. And the risk to officers' lives is reduced. Similarly, advice to win the "hearts and minds" of the people is useless if the military is widely perceived as being corrupt, among other things. Corruption also saps the morale of the enlisted men, most of whom are unwilling conscripts. They do not want to fight and die for officers who are enriching themselves from the war. No wonder so many of them have surrendered to the insurgents or thrown down their weapons and fled.

As long as Washington finds it expedient to aid the military "dons" and the criminal organization they run, they will control Duarte, and laugh quietly to themselves as the United States fills their coffers. Can the Salvadoran

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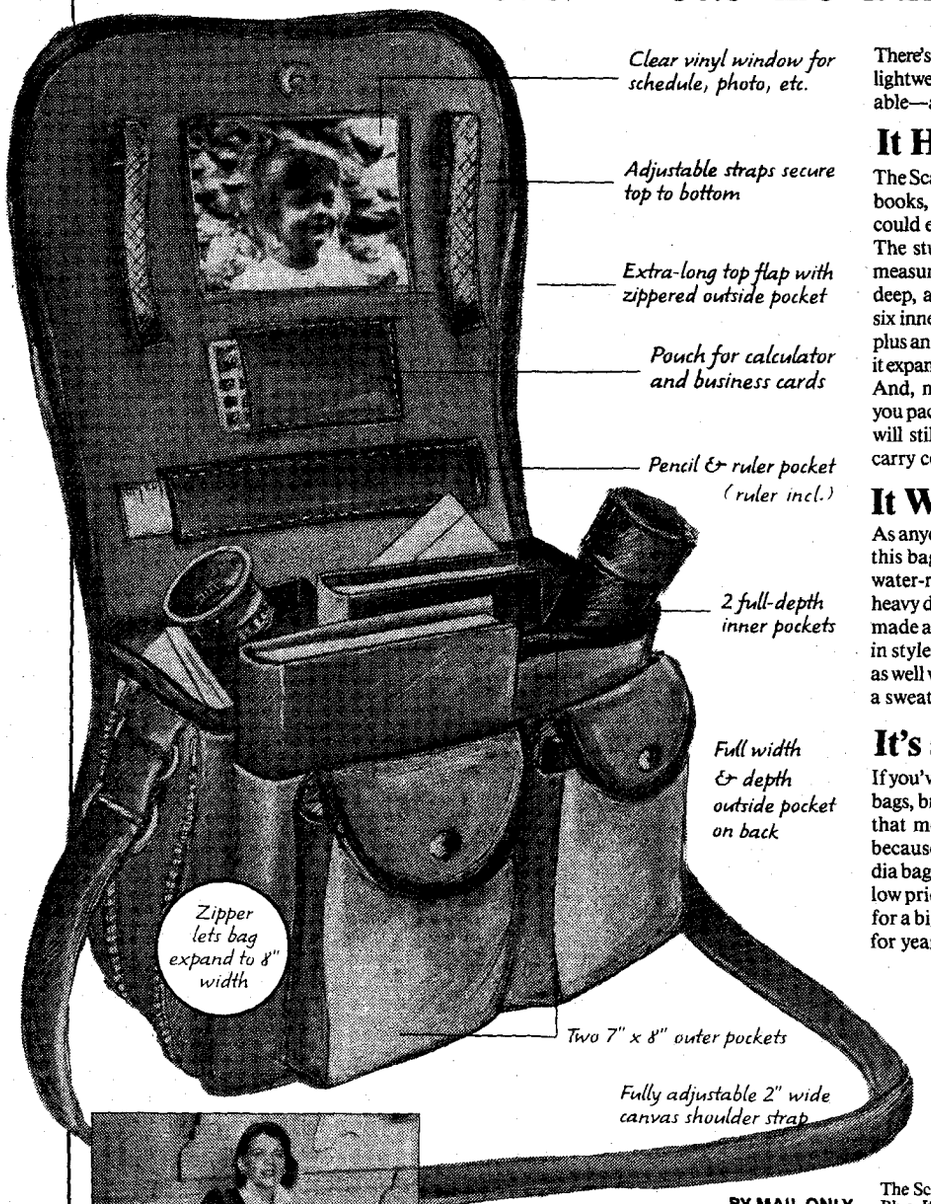
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military be cleaned up? If the corruption is as pervasive as the evidence strongly suggests, that will be difficult. In the past, however, there have been reform-minded junior officers who seemed to have another vision of their duty, and they may still be found in the ranks. But even if there were junior officers today who wanted to join with reformers to purge the high command and put officers on trial for corruption as well as murder, they would need strong U.S. support.

The Reagan Administration has little incentive to press for changes because it is trying to package the Salvadoran military as an increasingly professional, prodemocratic and proreform corps in order to get Congressional approval for aid. Critics of Administration policy tend to dismiss the corruption issue as secondary: they don't want to make the Salvadoran Army a more efficient force; they want to end its brutality and repression. What is not seen is that repression and corruption go hand in hand. This professional criminal organization defends its territory by brutalizing all of its opposition. Demanding an end to corruption, like demanding an end to gross violations of human rights, means demanding an end to the military in its present form, and that is a necessary condition for a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

Financing and training a band of brigands is bad policy. They remain an obstacle to any true reformers who seek to build a democracy with an honest military under civilian control. There is no way they are going to give the left a share of power. The result will be a continuation of the civil war that has paralyzed the country for five years. Washington's alliance with the mafia in uniform is as unwise as it is unholy. □

# 'Yellow Peril'

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

the record, Black told the jurors, "You are instructed to return a finding of guilty." The jurors returned the verdict as directed in ten minutes, and Black sentenced Hirabayashi to three months in jail, in addition to the five months he had already served.

Hirabayashi's appeal came before the Supreme Court in June 1943, along with another curfew challenge brought by Minoru Yasui, a young Portland lawyer and a lieutenant in the Army Reserve. Solicitor General Charles Fahy, representing the government, echoed Judge Black in defending the military orders on the basis of racial disloyalty. Arguing that Japanese-Americans "had never become assimilated," Fahy pointed out that some sent their children to Japanese-language schools. "In case of an invasion there would be among this group a number of persons who might assist the enemy," he concluded.

*Peter Irons is a lawyer and an associate professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego. He served as counsel to Fred Korematsu and testified at the Hirabayashi trial as a historical researcher. He is the author of* Justice at War *(Oxford University Press).*

The Supreme Court swallowed that argument whole. Upholding Hirabayashi's conviction by unanimous vote, the Court pointed to "the fact, demonstrated by experience, that in time of war residents having ethnic affiliations with an invading enemy" would be likely to engage in sabotage and espionage. Although Fahy had not provided any supporting evidence, the Court accepted his claim that the Japanese-American community on the West Coast included "disloyal members of that population, whose number and strength could not be precisely and quickly ascertained." Thus the Quaker pacifist and the patriotic Army officer, whom the Court conceded were loyal Americans, were tarred by the same racist brush.

When Gordon Hirabayashi returned to the Federal courthouse in Seattle in June, he was a 67-year-old professor emeritus of sociology at the University of Alberta in Canada. In January 1983 he had filed a lengthy petition charging that government lawyers committed serious acts of misconduct before the Supreme Court four decades earlier. Invoking an obscure provision of Federal law called the *coram nobis* writ, which allows convicted persons who have served their sentences to challenge the judicial principle of finality, Hirabayashi sought to have his conviction vacated on the ground that the government had concealed important evidence at the time of his trial and appeals.

Hirabayashi based his petition on documents he had obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. Among those papers, which were discovered four years ago in dusty cardboard boxes at the Justice Department, was a 1942 memorandum sent to Solicitor General Fahy by Edward Ennis, the lawyer responsible for preparing the government's Supreme Court brief in the Hirabayashi case. Ennis, who had directed the Alien Enemy Control Unit of the Justice Department, alerted Fahy to the existence of a Naval Intelligence report contradicting the Army's claim that widespread disloyalty among Japanese-Americans required their evacuation and internment. The report, prepared by Lieut. Comdr. Kenneth Ringle, who spoke Japanese fluently and had conducted an exhaustive inquiry along the West Coast, vouched for the loyalty of the overwhelming majority of Japanese-Americans and recommended against their mass evacuation.

Ennis had informed Fahy that the Justice Department had "a duty to advise the Court of the existence of the Ringle memorandum" and that "any other course of conduct might approximate the suppression of evidence." Fahy had ignored that blunt warning and left the Court ignorant of the Navy's position, although President Roosevelt himself had delegated the task of investigating Japanese-Americans to Naval Intelligence and Ringle's report had been circulated at the highest military levels. Hirabayashi's lawyers persuaded Ennis, now in private practice in New York City, to testify at the Seattle hearing on the *coram nobis* petition.

The prospect of a full-scale airing of Hirabayashi's charges upset Victor Stone, the Justice Department lawyer assigned to defend the government against the petitions filed

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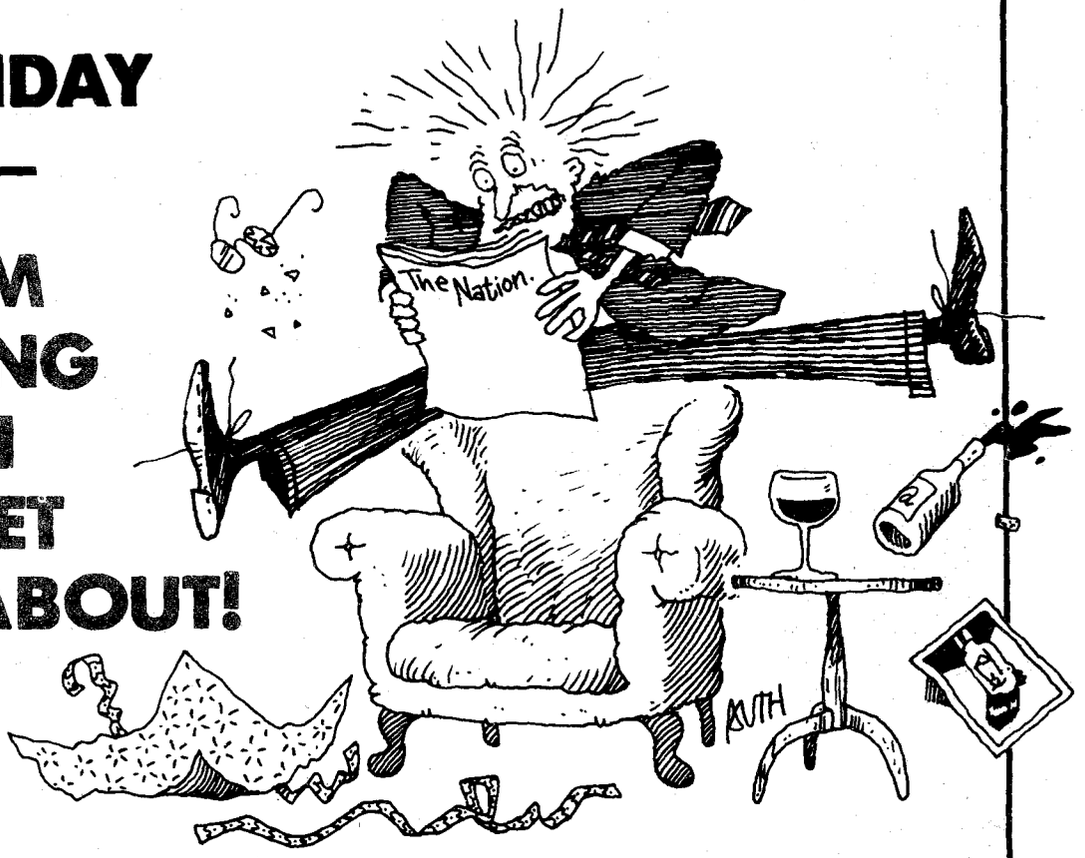


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by Hirabayashi and Yasui and by Fred Korematsu, whose criminal conviction for violating an evacuation order was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1944. An excitable, voluble man, Stone still smarted from the rebuke he received from Judge Marilyn Patel at a hearing on the Korematsu case in San Francisco in October 1983. Korematsu's petition centered on another Ennis memorandum, which warned Fahy not to pass on to the Supreme Court the "lies" in a War Department report that alleged widespread espionage on the part of Japanese-Americans. Fahy had assured the Court in oral argument that he stood behind "every syllable" of that report, which was a "complete justification" of the forced evacuation of Japanese-Americans.

At the Korematsu hearing, Stone ignored the charge of government misconduct and filed a two-page response to the petition, characterizing the internment as an "unfortunate episode" which the government regretted and promised not to repeat. In her written opinion Judge Patel blasted the government's response as "tantamount to a confession of error." She held that the Justice Department "deliberately omitted relevant information and provided misleading information" to the Supreme Court in 1944. "The judicial process is seriously impaired," she wrote, "when the government's law enforcement officers violate their ethical obligations to the court."

Stung by that judicial lecture, Stone changed his tactics for hearings on the Yasui and Hirabayashi petitions and filed a barrage of procedural objections in both cases: the two men had waited too long to seek review; they suffered no present legal disability from their convictions; and the cases were moot because the government had asked that the convictions be vacated as a matter of executive grace. All three men had earlier rejected Stone's offer of Presidential pardon (Korematsu had commented, "We should be the ones pardoning the government"). In January 1984 Judge Robert Belloni in Portland refused to consider Yasui's petition and granted Stone's motion to vacate his conviction without any judicial hearings or findings. Yasui appealed, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled on October 4 that his appeal had been filed too late, thus avoiding a direct ruling on Judge Belloni's action.

The hearing in the Hirabayashi case began on June 17 and lasted two weeks. Many of those jamming the Seattle courtroom were elderly Japanese-Americans who had endured three years of wartime internment. Sharing the wooden benches with them was a smaller contingent of local residents who have bitter memories of the war—the "Remember Pearl Harbor" group. The presiding judge was Donald S. Voorhees. Appointed to the bench in 1974 by Richard Nixon, Voorhees has a reputation for being a stickler for proper procedure, and Hirabayashi's lawyers considered him a fair-minded, conscientious jurist.

The hearing opened on a sour note for Stone. Hirabayashi's lawyers, Camden Hall and Rodney Kawakami, asked the judge to rule as inadmissible a huge pile of documents Stone had dumped on their desk that morning as the government's exhibits in the case. Voorhees had ordered Stone, several months earlier, to file a list of his exhibits at least ten days before the hearing. Stone apologized, saying that he had been working furiously to prepare for trial and had lugged seventeen boxes of documents with him from Washington. He promised to file a handwritten list of exhibits that afternoon, but Voorhees looked down from the bench, smiled and said, "Too late." After the session ended, Stone denounced the judge at an impromptu press conference and said, "I don't know how much is left of the case."

Stone's remarks did not please Voorhees. The following day, when Stone tried to introduce an excluded document in questioning Edward Ennis, Voorhees sustained an objection by Hall and cut off Stone's argument that he was simply trying to refresh Ennis's recollection. "I know you are angry about the court's ruling from the press accounts," Voorhees said. "The ruling I made was not an unusual one. I will not allow 'refreshing recollection' to be a subterfuge."

Ennis's testimony for Hirabayashi supported the case made by Hirabayashi's F.O.I.A. documents. In addition to confirming the "suppression of evidence" charge against Solicitor General Fahy, Ennis corroborated the defense's contention that in 1943 Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy deliberately withheld an Army report that contradicted the government's Supreme Court brief on a crucial issue. The brief argued that Japanese-Americans had been evacuated because the Army lacked time to conduct individual loyalty hearings, but the suppressed report had argued that time was not a factor because there was no way to distinguish loyal Japanese-Americans from disloyal ones.

Ennis faulted McCloy's deputy, Capt. John Hall, for not telling him about the Army report. "Captain Hall deceived me about the existence and nature of the report," Ennis testified. "The report was withheld from the Department of Justice so that we could not make corrections to it." In questioning Ennis, Camden Hall pointedly noted the absence of McCloy and Karl R. Bendetsen, the Army colonel who engineered the internment and prepared the disputed report, from the government's list of witnesses. Although both men vigorously defended their wartime actions in a recent Congressional hearing and both were accused of misconduct in the Hirabayashi petition, Stone had spared them the rigors of cross-examination under oath.

During the second week of the trial Stone sought to refute the misconduct charges and to defend the internment program. In sharp contrast to his tactics in the Korematsu and Yasui hearings, he came out swinging, calling a parade of witnesses who invoked the Yellow Peril fears of the time and labeled Japanese-Americans likely spies and saboteurs.

Stone's first witness, William Hammond, a retired Army colonel with wartime service in Combat Intelligence, testified that the Army "thoroughly expected" Japanese attacks on the West Coast and was concerned by reports of flashing lights and radio signals to enemy submarines. (Ennis had told the court that the F.B.I. had checked every one of those reports and had found that they had a prosaic

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explanation—a farmer lighting his way to an outhouse and the like.) Hammond provoked gasps of anger in the audience when he stated, "The most likely friends of the enemy were those of Japanese ancestry." A Caucasian spectator loudly added, "They're the ones who bombed Pearl Harbor."

Stone then called his star witness, David Lowman, a retired National Security Agency official and self-appointed crusader against the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, which reported to Congress in 1983 that a "grave injustice" had been committed against Japanese-Americans. At that time Lowman complained loudly to the press that the commission had ignored the "Magic" cables, the Japanese diplomatic messages which American cryptanalysts decoded in 1940. Lowman claimed the cables proved the existence of a "vast espionage net" on the West Coast made up of hundreds or perhaps thousands of Japanese-Americans. Judge Voorhees greeted Lowman's testimony with unconcealed skepticism. Announcing that he had read all eight volumes of "Magic" cables that Lowman had screened for the N.S.A., Voorhees said that "they don't prove a thing" about espionage by Japanese-Americans because not one cable identified an intelligence source by name.

Stone made much of a cable that Lowman had called an "espionage nugget" in his 1984 testimony before a House Judiciary subcommittee. It suggested that Japanese-Americans working in aircraft plants had transmitted production figures to Tokyo. When Lowman was cross-examined, the nugget turned into fool's gold. "Weren't these same figures printed in the *Los Angeles Times* ten days before this cable was sent?" Camden Hall asked, waving the article before Lowman, who promptly expanded his definition of intelligence sources to include the "open press." Lowman left the stand without having connected the cables to a single American citizen of Japanese ancestry.

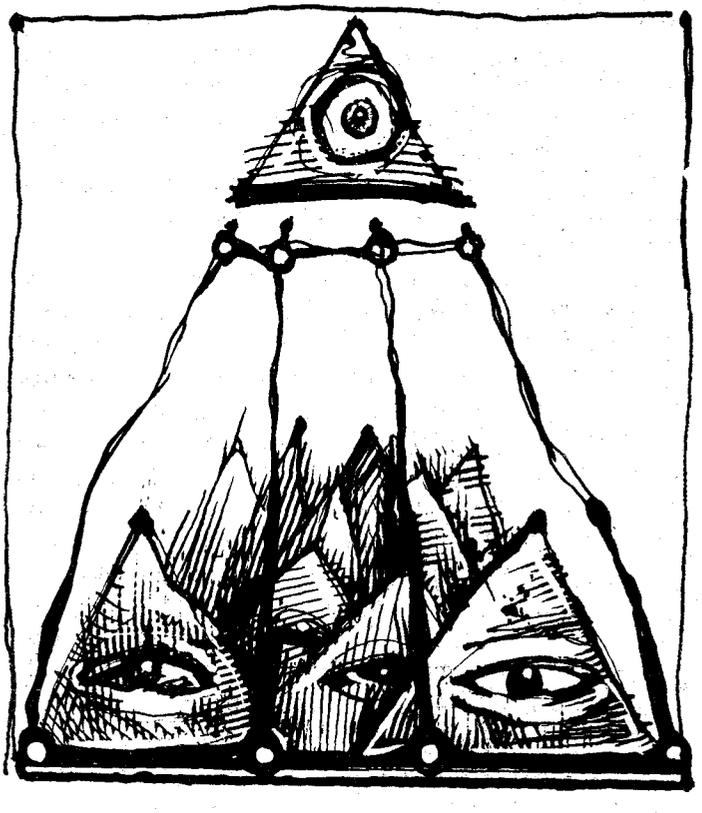
The two-week hearing ended on a note of unintended hilarity. Stone asked Voorhees to accept as evidence a sheaf of intelligence reports he claimed would prove the existence of a Japanese espionage net in the United States after Pearl Harbor. Voorhees declined to read the whole batch but said, "I'll take a look at your best one." Stone riffled through his notes and handed the judge a document. After a quick glance, Voorhees burst into laughter and told the audience: "I've got to read this for you. It says the Japanese espionage ring in Great Britain consists of twelve Englishmen, five Scotsmen, three Irish and one Welshman." When the courtroom laughter subsided, Voorhees rejected Stone's offer of proof.

The government's revival of the Yellow Peril in the Hirabayashi case is no laughing matter. Legal factors alone cannot explain why the Justice Department decided, after choosing not to appeal Judge Patel's decision in the Korematsu case, to battle Hirabayashi with witnesses who labeled Japanese-Americans "friends of the enemy." Stone has hinted to opposing lawyers that there are "hard-liners" in the Justice Department who still condemn Japanese-Americans for the attack on Pearl Harbor. There is also a political constituency on the West Coast that heatedly opposes the "redress" campaign seeking monetary compensation from the courts and Congress for those who were interned.

There is another possible explanation for the government's tactics in the Hirabayashi case. Pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia is a $12 billion damage suit brought on behalf of all surviving internees. A Federal District Court judge dismissed the suit on statute of limitations grounds and expressed his sympathy with the claimants. The appeal of this dismissal was argued on September 24, and the prospect that reversal might send the case to trial, on a record of evidence similar to that presented in the Hirabayashi petition, must not have pleased the Justice Department.

The resurgence of racism against Asians across the country must also be factored into the equation. From California to Boston, violence against Asians has spread, as the "Rambo syndrome" and "Japan-bashing" have become respectable. The murder of Vincent Chin in Detroit and the wave of attacks on Vietnamese and other Indochinese refugees testify to the ugly strain of racism the Reagan Administration has done little to counter.

Judge Voorhees has delayed his decision in the Hirabayashi case until both sides have submitted their post-trial briefs, and most likely will issue his ruling near the year's end. Forty years after the Japanese surrender, the Reagan Administration is waging a legal war against Americans of Japanese ancestry. But as Gordon Hirabayashi said in his challenge to the conviction that "hangs as a cloud" over all Japanese-Americans, "Ancestry is not a crime." □



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# BOOKS & THE ARTS.

## Conspiracy of Praise

EDWARD W. SAID

Joan Peters's book, *From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine*, was published by Harper & Row in the spring of 1984. Its jacket was covered with endorsements from Barbara W. Tuchman, Saul Bellow, Angier Biddle Duke, Philip M. Hauser, Elie Wiesel, Lucy Dawidowicz, Paul Cowan, Barbara Probst Solomon and Arthur J. Goldberg. Each endorsement testified to the book's immense importance: Tuchman described it as "a historical event in itself," and Bellow modestly stated that "millions of people the world over, smothered by false history and propaganda, will be grateful for this clear account of the origins of the Palestinians." After eight hardcover printings, Harper & Row has now issued a paperback edition of the book, bearing all these endorsements (minus that of Barbara Probst Solomon) plus a new one from Theodore H. White.

With only two exceptions, *From Time Immemorial* received favorable reviews in the American press. (Though as we shall see, its reception in Britain and Israel was almost uniformly negative.) Everyone—except for those two reviewers and Robert Olson, who dismissed the book in *American Historical Review*—commented on Peters's astonishingly thorough scholarship and her unprecedented findings. That assessment was made by relative amateurs (Walter Reich in *The Atlantic* and Timothy Foote in *The Washington Post*) as well as by seasoned pros (Daniel Pipes in *Commentary*, Ronald Sanders in *The New Republic* and John Campbell in *The New York Times*). The general impression was that Joan Peters had at last done all the work necessary to settle one of the most vexing and persistent problems of the twentieth century. No longer could a scholar or propagandist argue that "the Palestinians" (Peters entitled everyone to enclose the designation of a people in the quotation marks of suspicion) were in fact a real people with a real history in "Palestine." Her book asserted that their national as well as actual existence, and consequently their claims on Israel, were at best suspect and at worst utter fabrication. In other words, *From Time Immemorial* relieved Israel and its supporters of responsibility for the refugees created by the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, and for the subject people of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Although *From Time Immemorial* is clearly relevant to the contemporary debate about the Middle East in the United States, its peculiar distinction is to present itself as a full-scale history *ab origine* of the Palestine problem, which ventures to prove that the Palestinians are and have always been propaganda. How that strikes those of us who have memories of communal life in Haifa, Jerusalem, Safad, Jaffa and Nazareth before 1948 I shall leave to the reader's imagination. Peters claims that a careful rereading of demographic evidence shows that the British (and of course "the Arabs") suppressed evidence about the number of illegal Arab immigrants in Palestine before 1948. She argues that most of the 1948 refugees were in reality people who had not come to Palestine until 1946 and who therefore cannot possibly be considered true inhabitants of Palestine "from time immemorial." In any case, she says, their number has always been inflated for propaganda purposes—a fairly routine Israeli claim in the 1950s and 1960s, now discarded.

As for the tiny handful of "real" Arab inhabitants in "uninhabited" Palestine, they did a lot of what Peters calls "in-migrating," moving from place to place in Palestine, and were therefore little more than nomads. Given the history of Arab hatred of Jews, which Peters rehearses in much detail, she concludes that "the Palestinians"—who had been attracted by Jewish prosperity to those parts of Palestine from which they were later evicted—are a trick foisted on Israel and the rest of the gullible world merely to expedite the malevolent designs of Arab and Moslem anti-Semitism. Besides, she says, since many Jews expelled from the Arab world came to Israel after 1948, there was, at very least, parity in the movements of dispossessed people in and out of Palestine.

Nor is this all. Peters tells us that her research was carried out in a spirit of sympathy with the Arab refugees, that she visited them in their miserable camps and studied their history, culture and leaders at close range. That protestation was made much of by reviewers who found that it gave her conclusions the credibility of a genuine discovery arrived at by compassionate research. So obviously well-intentioned a person could have been converted only by the factual evidence she has so dutifully unearthed. (Peters doesn't mention in the body of the text that she wrote an article, "An Exchange of Populations," in the August 1976 issue of *Commentary*, where her notions about inveterate Arab anti-Semitism are trundled forth, along with the exchange-of-Arabs-for-Jews idea, all in a prose quite free of sympathy for the poor Arab refugees.)

*From Time Immemorial* bolsters its appearance of legitimacy by including an impressive list of mentors and scholarly authorities, whom Peters thanks profusely. This list of worthies (Peters implies they are virtually her collaborators) includes famous Orientalists like Elie Kedourie, Bernard Lewis and P.J. Vatikiotis. Not one of those men is known for his Arab sympathies, which is probably why not a single one has made any attempt to dissociate himself from her or her ideas even though evidence of her numerous errors and falsifications has been circulating for some time. Besides, their respectability hasn't been threatened, so why should they bother about so trivial a question as the scholarly truth of Peter's book?

For someone with no academic credentials, and with only the sketchiest foreign policy and press background, Joan Peters has now become something of an authority on Arab-Jewish matters for the media (nonfiction's answer to Leon Uris). Interviews with her dot newspapers and magazines across the country, and she has been a guest on numerous radio and television talk shows. *From Time Immemorial* has received, according to Peters, "200 to 300" favorable reviews and, in the spring of this year, won a prize in the Jewish

*Edward W. Said is a professor of English at Columbia University. His book* After the Last Sky, *written with Jean Mohr, will be published by Pantheon next spring.*

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The two exceptions to this quite extraordinary outpouring of praise were an article in the September 11, 1984 issue of *In These Times*, by Norman Finkelstein, a graduate student at Princeton University, and a review in the Fall 1984 *Journal of Palestine Studies*, by Bill Farrell, a law student at Columbia University. In what I shall now relate, both young men played courageous roles, and if I speak more about Finkelstein it is to note his amazing persistence despite odds that would have deterred almost anyone else. Finkelstein showed that Peters's work was what he called a "hoax": her evidence was unsound in all sorts of ways; her demographic statistics were inconsistent, mathematically impossible, wildly exaggerated; and, most important, in all the cases he was able to check, she either plagiarized Zionist propaganda sources or deliberately tampered with quotations so as to change their meaning entirely. Much of one chapter, for example, is lifted—mistakes and all—from Ernst Frankenstein's *Justice For My People*, published in 1942. In one place illegal Arab immigration is suggested as "at least" 200,000; in another, 370,000; in a third, 1,300,000; in a fourth, 3,700,000. Taking the same approach Farrell came up with similar results. When, for example, Peters quotes from the *Hope Simpson Report* of 1930, she transforms the phrase "Egyptian labour is being employed in certain individual cases" to "According to that Report, evidence of Arab immigration abounded: 'Egyptian labor is being employed.'" Where the Anglo-American *Survey of Palestine* (1945-46) says that in October 1942 "as a matter of emergency" 3,800 laborers were brought into Palestine from Syria and Lebanon, Peters says: "What the official Anglo-American *Survey* of 1945-46 definitively disclosed . . . is that . . . tens of thousands of 'Arab illegal immigrants' [were] *recorded* as having been 'brought' into . . . Palestine." And so on and on.

Since the core of Peter's case was based on a (mis)reading of demographic evidence, both Farrell and Finkelstein took pains to check and recheck her findings, which they found unacceptable. What neither of them noted, however, is that the last census for Palestine was done under British mandate in 1931. No population estimates of twentieth-century Palestine can avoid its findings, which show a vast native Arab majority. Peters totally ignores that census, just as she ignores the authoritative demographic work of Janet Abu-Lughod, Justin McCarthy and others, whose conclusions are diametrically opposed to her own. Instead she relies on Ottoman statistics for the 1890s, compiled by Professor Kemal Karpat of the University of Wisconsin, and on the impressions of a nineteenth-century French traveler, Vital Cuinet. These do little more for her case than add a lot of numbers to what is already a tiresomely shrill text dotted with embarrassing errors, such as the use of medieval historian Makrizi as an eyewitness source about nineteenth-century Palestine. (To his credit, Bernard Gwertzman noted the book's offensive tone in his review for *The New York Times*, on May 12, 1984.)

Despite undercurrents of suspicion about Peters's book set off by Finkelstein, only two publications have followed up on his evidence and printed anything systematically critical of *From Time Immemorial*'s major points. In *The Guardian* and *The Nation* respectively, Noam Chomsky and Alexander Cockburn described what Peters and her ecstatic reviewers were up to, but no one else has paid much attention. At one point, Colin Campbell of *The New York Times* expressed some enthusiasm for writing an article like the one he had done on the David Abraham case, but then he dropped the matter.

When the book appeared in Britain this spring it received a vastly different set of reviews. It is worth citing a passage from one of those reviews to give some sense of the startling difference between Britain and the United States when it comes to discussion about the Middle East. *The Observer* assigned *From Time Immemorial* to Albert Hourani of Oxford University, probably the world's foremost authority on modern Middle Eastern history. Not incidentally, no scholar of stature was granted the privilege of reviewing Peters in the United States, nor was it entrusted to someone *not* already known for his or her unqualified support for Israel. The single exception to this pattern may be *The New York Review of Books* which reportedly assigned *From Time Immemorial* to Yehoshua Porath, the leading Israeli authority on Palestinian nationalism, an eminent historian and a man known for his moderate views about the Palestinians. To date, however, Porath's article has not ap-

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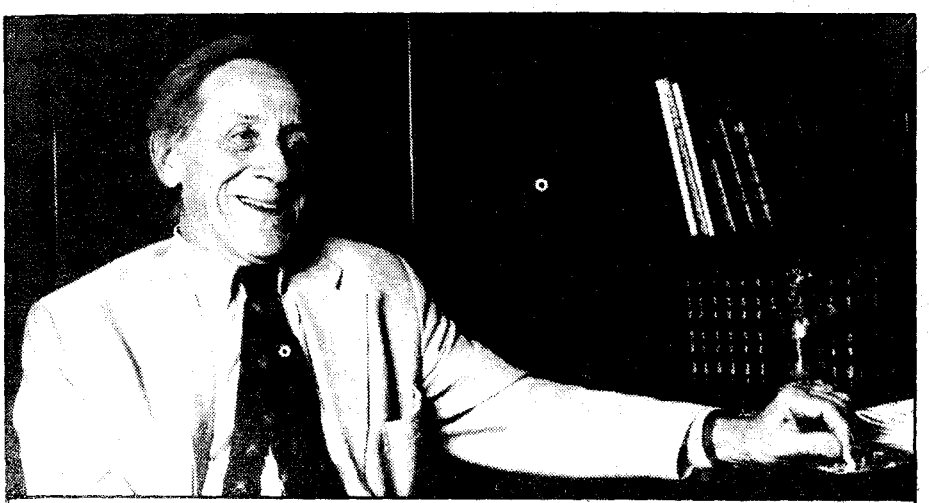
peared, although Robert Silvers has assured me that he hopes the review will run sometime in the future.

At any rate, here is the concluding part of Hourani's review in the March 5 issue of *The Observer*:

> Ms. Peters has found, or been provided with, a large number of documents, but most are well-known, and many of them she misunderstands or quotes out of context. She denounces British policy because she believes it broke the promise of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate that Palestine "east and west of the Jordan river" should become a "Jewish homeland." But the Declaration carefully avoided saying that Palestine should become a "Jewish homeland"; and the British decision to set up an Arab princedom in Transjordan, and exclude it from the area in which a Jewish national home should be created, was in accordance with the terms of the Mandate.
>
> Her argument that enormous numbers of Arabs came illegally into Palestine also has no basis. One of her few pieces of evidence is a statement made by an obscure Syrian official in 1934, that more than 30,000 Syrians had entered Palestine and settled there during a few months. The Permanent Mandates Commission asked a British representative for his opinion of this, and he said it was "grossly exaggerated." Ms. Peters quotes the statement by the Syrian official but not the British reply; on the next page the statement becomes "verified by an official international document"; a little later it has become "hard evidence," in the light of which British statements to the contrary can be dismissed as fallacious.
>
> The whole book is written like this: facts are selected or misunderstood, tortuous and flimsy arguments are expressed in violent and repetitive language. This is a ludicrous and worthless book and the only mildly interesting question it raises is why it comes with praise from two well-known American writers.

In their 8,000-word essay for *The London Review of Books*, Ian and David Gilmour went painstakingly through *From Time Immemorial*, recording a huge number of its inconsistencies and falsifications, among them Peters's suppression of the fact that no Jewish leader of note until, and even after, 1948 denied the presence of the native Arab Palestinian majority. The Gilmours note that Peters misleadingly bandies about population figures for "Jewish settled areas" but does not

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reveal that those areas amounted only to 4 or 5 per cent of the whole country, or—a slightly more subtle tactic—that figures for Christian Arabs are simply left out. Peters's revival of the *canard* about the Arabs leaving voluntarily is also dispatched by the Gilmours, as is her ludicrous contention that British policy encouraged Arab immigration into Palestine.

Similar reviews turned up in *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The Spectator* (which compared *From Time Immemorial* with Clifford Irving's "autobiography" of Howard Hughes), *Time Out* and *The Sunday Times*, although Peters, whose contact with fact seems tentative, has described the British reviews as "excellent." But perhaps the most revealing thing about this strange book was its reception in Israel this past spring. Most notices of the book were perfunctory and dismissive; *Davar's* full-length review on March 29 treated it with unmistakable contempt. According to the reviewer, *From Time Immemorial*'s main defect was its embarrassing use of discredited Israeli *hasbara* ("propaganda"). It should be noted that most of Peters's earthshaking evidence about the nonexistent Palestinians had already been used by official and semi-official Israeli information agencies during the 1950s and 1960s, and that it is now quite commonplace for Israeli government representatives to warn against re-using this worthless stuff. One gets the impression that Israel had written the book off when Peters appeared in the country to reap the glory of her personal, uniquely American *hasbara* effort. Hence, she was kept out of the public eye; she returned to the United States just in time to receive her Israel award in New York.

There are several curious facets to this egregious book. Many passages contain disconnected items all pressed into making the same point. The impression you get is of one team of experts tossing file cards into large folders labeled "Jews, Arab hatred of," or "Palestinians, myths of," and another team pasting them onto more or less consecutive pages. That Peters has nothing to say about the immense amount of Arab, or for that matter Israeli, material on Palestine, all of it easily enough available, is testimony to how narrowly focused, how dry and single-minded, is her effort. During the past five years alone there have been several volumes of original Arab documentation of Palestinian life in Palestine. (Scholars and reviewers interested in assessing Peters's book may also consult two very recent works, Walid Khalidi's fine *Before Their Diaspora: A Photographic History of the Palestinians 1876-1948*, and Basheer K. Nijim and Bishara Muammar's *Toward the De-Arabization of Palestine-Israel, 1945-1977.*) Such works prove that a native Arab community once flourished in Palestine, and that it was not simply the illegal, temporary presence of a small, shifty population of nameless vagrants sneaked in by rascally anti-Semitic British officials acting in cahoots with a worldwide network of Arab fanatics. Peters touches on none of this, nor does she refer to the large bibliography of scholarly Western works on the history of Palestine, many of which give the lie to her preposterous thesis.

Granted that Peters is an inept writer, a bad propagandist and a hopelessly incompetent historian, how is it that virtually no criticism of her work has appeared in the United States? Let us grant also that Harper & Row continues to ignore evidence of her falsifications and plagiarisms. Why do normally competent editors, historians, journalists and intellectuals go along with the fiction that *From Time Immemorial* is a wonderful work of historical discovery? Peters's factual distortions and innumerable mistakes have been exhaustively documented by Norman Finkelstein, yet no one paid attention to him, no one followed his leads. No one paid the slightest heed to the British reviews, or to those in Israel. Worst of all, no one has demanded that Peters and her supporters respond to the huge list of accusations that her book has collected in the eighteen months since it appeared. She still gives interviews to American journalists, cheerfully asserting the complete acceptance of her work.

I speak here less as a Palestinian who wants to keep saying "but we exist and always have and will," than as an American intellectual disgraced by the shoddiness of our present so-called life of the mind. The Peters case is not just a matter of poor work. It is, after all, a case of orchestrated compliance by which the history and actuality of an entire people are consigned to nonexistence. Where are all those guardians of intellectual morality who, in a chorus led by the Conor Cruise O'Briens and

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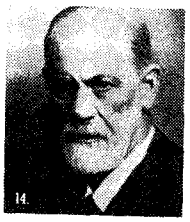

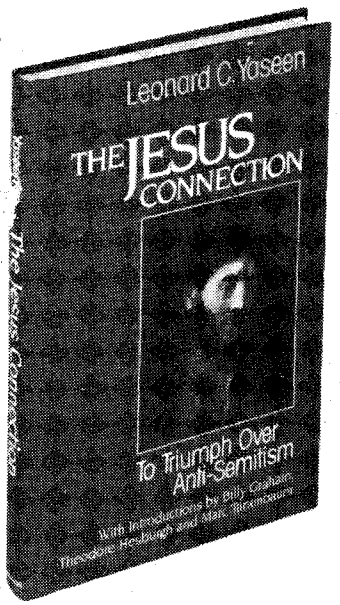


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the Leszek Kolakowskis, whine about Communist and Third World disinformation and propaganda, who stalwartly defend American freedom of expression and healthy debate, who invoke Orwell and denounce totalitarianism? Has it come to this, then: an unconsciously held ideology that permits the most scandalous and disgusting lies—execrably written, totally disorganized, hysterically asserted—to pass as genuine scholarship, factual truth, political insight, without any significant challenge, demurral or even polite reservation?

The sad truth is that where discussion of Israel is concerned, the United States is well below Israel itself in norms of truth and methods of debate. Here then is a perfect illustration of Richard Hofstader's "paranoid style" in American political life. This is not, alas, a matter of the left being better than the right. The young progressives who publish *Radical History* conscientiously avoid discussion of the Palestinians. Those who know better are cowed by the Israeli lobby. It is true that the American-Israeli Political Action Committee has been criticized in the press for its campus campaigns against those who have dared to speak out against Israel or to support Palestinian rights; yet how many deans and faculty members have raised their voices against the censorship and blackmail still applied by AIPAC against "enemies" on the nation's campuses?

To read Peters and her supporters is, for Palestinians, to experience an extended act of ethnocide carried out by pseudoscholarship. Tom Sawyer attends his own funeral as a kind of lark, whereas we are being threatened with death before being permitted birth. And we are told to stay out of the whole thing. The irony of this occurring in the United States at a time when so many effusions about Middle Eastern peace are perpetually stymied by U.S. and Israeli actions designed to keep Palestinians out should not be difficult to detect. In this way—democratically—do intellectuals and the state synchronize their efforts to sweep the small people of this world under the rug.

The one thing I still cannot grasp is how people can be so foolish as to believe *From Time Immemorial*'s contention that the Palestinians are something made up or imaginary, like the unicorn or the tooth fairy. Why do Barbara Tuchman and Saul Bellow, for example, expect that 4 million of us, scattered everywhere, can be made to repeat the lie of our existence for 35 years? Do they imagine that all of us get instructions from a central propaganda office? And, toughest question of all, how have we been as successful as Peters implies in uniting most of the Arab, Islamic, Third World, European and Socialist community in our cause if we are no more than a myth? Surely it would have been a lot less trouble for us simply to get a Palestinian state! □

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# The Lenore Marshall Prize

*The Lenore Marshall/Nation Poetry Prize of $7,500, awarded annually for an outstanding book of poems published in the United States, is sponsored by the New Hope Foundation in conjunction with* The Nation. *Previous winners of the prize have been Josephine Miles (1983), George Starbuck (1982), John Logan (1981), Sterling A. Brown (1980), Stanley Kunitz (1979), Hayden Carruth (1978), Allen Tate (1977), Philip Levine (1976), Denise Levertov (1975) and Cid Corman (1974).*

*This year the prize has been awarded to John Ashbery for his book* A Wave *(Viking). The judges were Rika Lesser, Dave Smith and John Hollander, who has contributed the accompanying essay.*

It is to Horace that we owe the observation that even the splendid Homer nods occasionally, and to our own experience that not only great works of literature but important bodies of work by major writers have their low points. A jury charged with the task of selecting the year's outstanding book of poems finds it unusually satisfying when a poet of the highest rank publishes a superb volume.

In the first place, poets, critics and other readers must delight in evidences of the healthy life of a poetic *oeuvre*: too often, literary careers can deaden the spirit that animates true art by forcing writers to produce multiple counterfeit of their own earlier, better work or mere products with a recognizable signature. In the second place, it makes it less regrettable to see first-rate work by other contenders yield to unequivocal excellence.

The Lenore Marshall Prize this year has been awarded to John Ashbery's *A Wave*. There were well over one hundred submissions, including some fine books by younger and older writers, and yet it was most gratifying that there was no need to pass over a book by one of the finest poets of our age. Ashbery has deservedly won all the important awards given for poetry in the United States, and last spring was honored with a MacArthur Fellowship. *A Wave* is his eleventh book of poems and marks that high level of accomplishment and imaginative power that could be glimpsed in his first collection, *Some Trees*, which won the Yale Younger Poets Award in 1956. In poems like "Some Trees," "The Mythological Poet," "The Picture of Little J.A. in a Prospect of Flowers" and others, he looked far beyond the fashionable late modernism of their literary moment, and in those like "The Instruction Manual" he constructed a paradigm for many of his later poems. His protagonists, coping with the tasks of daily life, are, throughout his work, bearers of our last remaining hope for centrality, the heroic consciousness. Ashbery is thus a poet like Whitman and Stevens, although even his most appreciative critics have taken insufficient notice of this remarkably original poet's relation to W.H. Auden.

Like many important poets, Ashbery has been misunderstood by many of his admirers, who consider him as part of a poetic movement (there are no true

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poetic movements, only literary associations), the so-called "New York School"; who admire his affiliations with the New York art world; and who don't always distinguish between poetic density and the difficulties it produces.

A reader previously unacquainted with Ashbery's central work may trace its development from many of the poems in *Some Trees* through "A Last World" in his second book, *The Tennis Court Oath* (1962), through "Clepsydra," "The Skaters" and the title poem of *Rivers and Mountains* (1966), on through "Soonest Mended" and "Fragment" in the 1970 volume, *The Double Dream of Spring*. Here he establishes his characteristic mode in the long, apparently discursive poem, further developed in his prose meditations in *Three Poems* (1972); the title poem of *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (1975) as well as the magnificent, somewhat shorter "Grand Galop" in the same volume; "Fantasia on 'The Nut-Brown Maid'" in *Houseboat Days* (1977); and the splendid "A Wave," which gives its name to the current prize-winning collection.

In one sense, these are all love poems; in another, they are about work and about the major quests of modernity—the getting through the phases of one's life as if they were at once the labors of Hercules and the sequential clues of a children's treasure hunt. They are immensely serious meditations on the nature of maturity, on the ramifications of that central tragic pattern of learning that shapes all but the dullest of lives ("If I only knew then what I did later . . . "). "A Wave" is characteristic of Ashbery's diction in its complex, periodic expository style (as well as, from time to time, its undramatically colloquial one), a poetic way of walking through a contemplative course and suddenly turning a corner onto a wildly metaphoric formulation. It is full of the catalogues of objects and moments celebrated elsewhere in his work, considerations of

> everything, in short,
> That makes this explicit earth what it
> appears to be in our
> Glassiest moments when a canoe
> shoots out from under some foliage
> Into the river and finds it calm, not all
> that exciting but above all
> Nothing to be afraid of, celebrates us
> And what we have made of it.

This volume also breaks new ground for Ashbery in "Description of a Masque," an exuberant prose poem which resembles the court masques of Ben Jonson. And the intense yet exquisite shorter poem of a kind exemplified in the poet's previous work by "Tapestry" and "Wet Casements" is represented by the poems reprinted below.

Born in Rochester, New York, in

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Imagine some tinkling curiosity from the years back—
The fashions aren't old enough yet to look out of fashion.
It is a picture of patient windows, with trees
Of two minds half-caught in their buzz and luster,
The froth of everyone's ideas as personal and skimpy as ever.

The windows taught us one thing: a great, square grief
Not alleviated or distracted by anything, since the pattern
Must establish itself before it can grow old, cannot weather nicely
Keeping a notion of squirrels and peacocks to punctuate
Chapters of fine print as they are ground down, growing ever finer
To assume the strict title of dust someday. No, there is no room now
For oceans, blizzards: only night, with fingers of steel
Pressing the lost lid, searching forever unquietly the mechanism
To unclasp all this into warbled sunlight, the day
The gaunt parson comes to ask for your hand. Nothing is flying,
Sinking; it is as though the resistance of all things
To the earth were so much casual embroidery, years
In the making, barely glimpsed at the appointed time.

Through it all a stiffness persists
Of someone who had changed her mind, moved by your arguments
And waiting till the last possible moment to confess it,
To let you know you were wanted, even a lot, more than you could
Imagine. But all that is, as they say, another story.

DOWN BY THE STATION,
EARLY IN THE MORNING

It all wears out. I keep telling myself this, but
I can never believe me, though others do. Even things do.
And the things they do. Like the rasp of silk, or a certain
Glottal stop in your voice as you are telling me how you
Didn't have time to brush your teeth but gargled with Listerine
Instead. Each is a base one might wish to touch once more

Before dying. There's the moment years ago in the station in Venice,
The dark rainy afternoon in fourth grade, and the shoes then,
Made of a dull crinkled brown leather that no longer exists.
And nothing does, until you name it, remembering, and even then
It may not have existed, or existed only as a result
Of the perceptual dysfunction you've been carrying around for years.
The result is magic, then terror, then pity at the emptiness,
Then air gradually bathing and filling the emptiness as it leaks,
Emoting all over something that is probably mere reportage
But nevertheless likes being emoted on. And so each day
Culminates in merriment as well as a deep shock like an electric one,

As the wrecking ball bursts through the wall with the bookshelves
Scattering the works of famous authors as well as those
Of more obscure ones, and books with no author, letting in
Space, and an extraneous babble from the street
Confirming the new value the hollow core has again, the light
From the lighthouse that protects as it pushes away.

From *A Wave* (Viking), © 1984 by John Ashbery.

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1927, Ashbery went to Harvard and to graduate school at Columbia. He lived for a decade in Paris, where he worked as an art critic for the Paris edition of the *New York Herald Tribune*, returned to New York City in the late 1960s, and became an editor of *Art News*. In recent years he has taught creative writing at Brooklyn College, where he is Distinguished Professor of English, and he serves as a regular art critic for *Newsweek*. Aside from his books of poetry, he has written plays and, in collaboration with James Schuyler, a novel, *A Nest of Ninnies*. It is fitting that the Lenore Marshall Prize has been awarded to so central an American poet at the height of his technical and conceptual strength.

JOHN HOLLANDER

## FRENCH NEWSCAST

Good evement. Accordinque des les many 'elpeurs de Presidment Raigain, 'e est fit de la fiddelle aftoire his L'Operation Greenpeace. (Wheuppes!) Sadly, howeveire, 'e will nevaire plaix eet d'again!

Eau-quais! Les oui actuel sunc Le Greenpeace beut, saix our officialles. Trueux? Je shrug les shouldeurs! Personalment, howeveire—ouell, I am non de speaque accept en whispeures! (*Whispers*) Oui did eet! Hurraix!

En othoire neus, France et des alliez are maquinque plans de drive L'Almightment Dolloire down to le basement des bargainnes. Les othoire alliez—I fourget their nommes—are West Germanie, Brittaine, Japment, Les Etats Unique et France.

Meenouille, at Les U.N. (Les Nationnes Undecidment) un partie de birthdaix has L'Australia hoppinque et Le Soviettes stomppinque—Oui! Cette un danse!

'Ave un pleasment nuit. M. Dupleau will be bac tomereau. 'E 'ad le fleu . . . —*Hugo Flesch*

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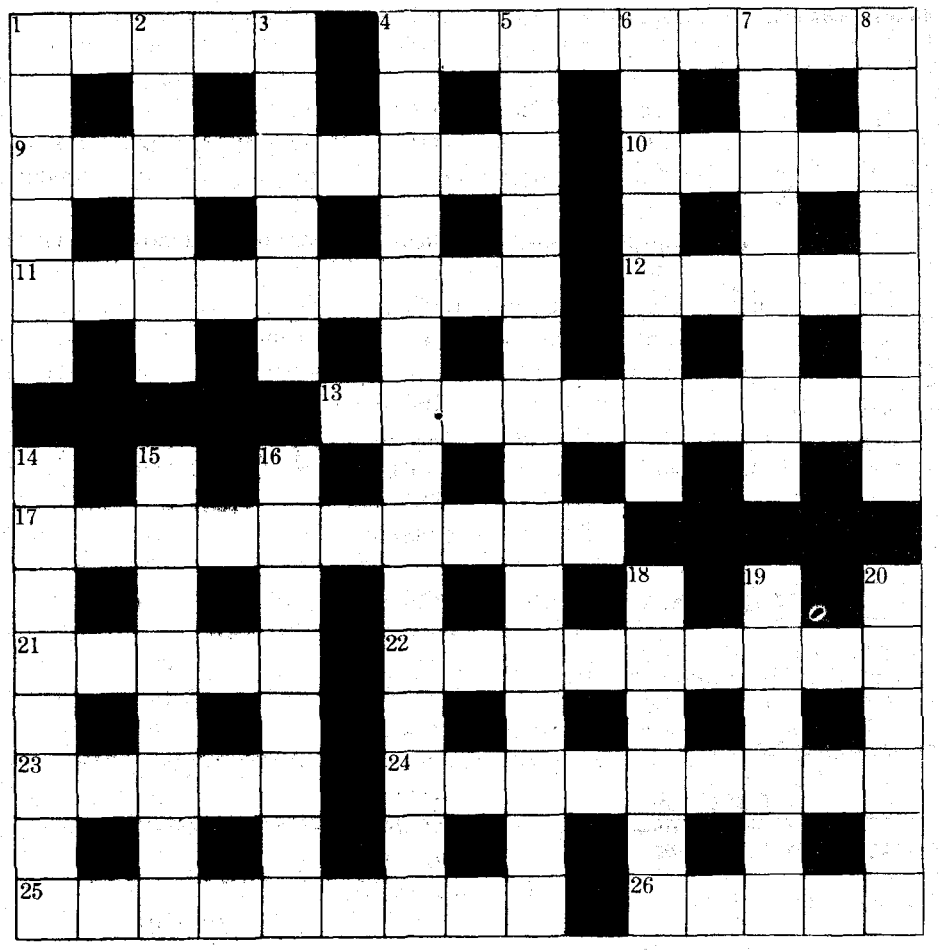
# Crossword Puzzle No. 2074

FRANK W. LEWIS



## ACROSS

1 People on them would not be quick to hear one can get stout, for example. (5)
4 Found in the Penn or the Astor, perhaps typified by New England. (9)
9 No links around if one is. (9)
10 But you won't do it up if you have a cough! (5)
11 China could lose a certain amount of soil by inundation, if this is applied. (9)
12 On the one Grofé described? (5)
13 Perhaps indulge in "Sweet Adeline" around the club, but you'd be incoherent if you were. (10)
17 Someone like a Malay could be extremely brave when one's caught in middle. (10)
21 Things do by prolonged subjection. (5)
22 On the inside, it starts with the final part, and ends nice, or otherwise. (9)
23 An Italian town is, to a possible eruption. (5)
24 To make what's far seem near, getting to the pole, in a way. (9)
25 The anticipation of getting an estate for small change? (9)
26 and 1 down Off base, like an old rabbit? (3,2,6)

## DOWN

1 See 26 across
2 If you're in a hurry, you might ask people to do it to you. (6)
3 An example in this? (Golfers should pay attention to it.) (6)
4 Mine stops, but not exactly after the sergeant goes crazy. (3,6,6)
5 Traditionally the flag of a Communist, pallid and discouraged. (3,5,3,4)
6 It should find its mark, with zero if it's bad. (8)
7 The way an Italian might go to town, having a slight nervous disorder affecting the nose. (8)
8 "Analysis situs" suggests the highest science. (8)
14 Get along (but not if you have a chip on your shoulder and someone else does.) (3,2,3)
15 Does one hold a fitting position, or is one involved in a fix? (8)
16 Undamaged on the outside, about to come up on the inside to affect each other. (8)
18 Victor in a punishing struggle. (6)
19 Ran away, as they say. (It's burning, and not burning!) (3,3)
20 You can't watch TV this way, but make a start! (3,3)

**PUZZLED?**

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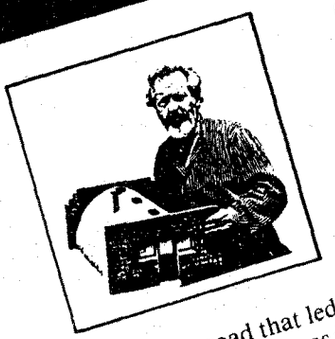
Los Angeles Times

# Old Warrior Now on Road to Nicaragua



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"In 1937, I went to Spain to defend the right of a people to self-determination which was threatened by Hitler and Mussolini," he said, "and in 1985 I'm going to Nicaragua to defend the right of a people for their self-determination, which is threatened by my own country."

But this time, Osheroff isn't carrying a gun to battle for his political viewpoint . . .

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